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The utilization of the romance theme is effective in rendering both an ironic and tragic portrayal of Theron Ware in Harold Frederic's novel The Damnation of Theron Ware. In this thesis the archetypal romance pattern is defined with reference to the discussion of the romance in Northrop Frye's Anatomy of Criticism -- with the hero striving to develop a moral ethic which will enable him to achieve a valid identity within his society. The innocent Theron Ware is influenced by figures who fulfill roles of archetypal significance in the romance, being either for or against the hero's quest and intricately involved in the trials and final resolution of the hero's difficulties in social adjustment. When the characters who fulfill these roles fail to direct Theron Ware toward the achievement of success, the traditional intention of their influence becomes ironic. Finally, the tragedy of Theron Ware's failure is developed through Harold Frederic's objective presentation of Theron's inability to accurately appraise the moral condition of his own society, and, thereby, determine his proper relationship to it.

ARCHETYPAL PATTERNS OF THE ROMANCE

IN THE DAMNATION OF THERON WARE

By

William Henry Hagen, Jr.

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Approved by:

Donald G. Danell
Director

APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis has been approved by the following committee of the faculty of the Graduate School of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Thesis
Director

Donald G. Darnell

Oral Examination
Committee Members

Donald G. Darnell
Robert D. Stephens
Edward H. & Crady III
Arthur W. Dixon

June 3, 1968
Date of Examination

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It should be determined from biographical material concerning Joseph Frederic's personal education, whether or not he had definite knowledge of the use of the archetype and its occurrence in literary art. He does have an important character, a Catholic priest, sympathetic to the higher activities, who discusses the Christ myth and its occurrence in the religious history of mankind. However, to say that Frederic had definite plans for the use of this, or any other archetypal pattern in his work, would be pure conjecture. The purpose of this discussion is to illustrate that the application of the romance archetypal pattern to *The Education of Theron Ware* is an effective critical approach to understanding the development of tragic irony in the novel.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Damnation of Theron Ware combines elements of the romance archetype with the realistic description of omniscient narration to produce an ironic tragedy. Harold Frederic's novel is not a romance, but to understand the method by which he develops irony in his novel it will be necessary to understand the characteristics of the romance as a literary genre. The elements of the romance can then be compared with The Damnation of Theron Ware to determine what qualities of the romance Frederic uses in his novel, and how he contrasts these qualities with the realism in the story to produce both irony and tragedy.¹

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Northrop Frye briefly defines the literary form of the romance as the completion of a three-stage quest -- the conflict, the death struggle, and the final resolution of the conflict. The central figure, the hero of the narrative, becomes the questor whose individual conflict develops from an inaccurate concept of reality.² Because of his misjudgment the hero cannot identify himself or his values with his world. The death struggle is an attempt by the hero to define reality as it actually exists and dispel his misconceptions. The resolution comes when the hero adjusts to a valid concept of reality and develops a new identity or relationship with life. The three stages of the quest are often compared to the natural cycle of birth, death and rebirth, or the cycle of the seasons -- fall, winter and spring. The psychological development of the romance hero is correspondingly described by Joseph Campbell as a multi-stage process:

...the first work of the hero is to retreat from the world of sense of secondary effects to the causal zones of the psyche where difficulties really reside, and there to clarify the difficulties, eradicate them in his own case, ...and break through to the undistorted, direct experience and assimilation of what C. G. Jung has called "the archetypal images."³

²Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (New York, 1965), p. 187.

³Joseph Campbell, The Hero With A Thousand Faces (New York, 1949), pp. 17-18.

The problem of the hero lies in his own concept of reality -- the real world itself does not change. Therefore, if the hero is to adjust and have a valid relationship to reality, he must discover the values which work best in his world. It is for this reason, Northrop Frye states that the romance "is marked by ..., its search for some kind of an imaginative golden age in time or space."⁴ The author of the romance supports a certain ethical code which provides for a successful identity in life. The romance becomes a search for an "imaginative golden age" when the romance author considers his ethical code as inherent in reality.

Joseph Campbell alludes to this ideal ethical code when he refers to the archetypal images: those aspects of the real world which are defined by human experience. Jung says archetypes "occur practically all over the earth as constituents of myths" and spring spontaneously from each individual consciousness.⁵ In literature archetypes indicate the true nature of reality which become the "Undistorted and direct experience" for the hero. In the romance there exist two basic forms of archetypal influences, the characters who help the hero with his quest and those

⁴Frye, p. 186.

⁵Carl G. Jung, Psychology and Religion (New Haven, 1938), p. 63.

who hinder or try to obstruct the successful completion of the quest. The author of the romance projects his ideals or his society's ideals in the good or helpful archetypal figures. The hero of the romance has only to understand and adopt one set of values, those implicit in the romance. This adjustment will ensure his complete identity with his society and his world.

As stated before, The Damnation of Theron Ware is not an example of the romance literary form. However, archetypal figures of the romance tradition influence Theron Ware in his attempt to successfully complete his quest, i.e., determine the nature of his reality and discover an identity within it. If The Damnation of Theron Ware were a traditional romance, Theron Ware would merely have to discover and adapt to a set of social values which provide the most valid relationship to reality. However, Harold Frederic's novel diverges from the romance pattern at this point. The author does not express one set of values as being superior to all others. Each character in the novel who has successfully adjusted to reality, has developed an ethical code peculiar to his own experience. Therefore, in this novel one ethical code works just as well as another. Theron Ware does not consciously apply the romance pattern to his own life, but he does abandon his early concept of reality in search of an ethic which will be superior to all others. The irony of the novel is developed when Frederic

contrasts objective reality with Theron's futile search. It becomes apparent that a superior ethical code does not exist except on a personal or individual level. If Theron Ware's quest is to be successful, he must develop an understanding of the equal validity of many different ethical codes in his society. This understanding will allow him to apply his old values to his new situation and maintain his personal identity in his society.

Theron Ware is a young minister popular with his rural congregations because of an unselfish devotion to his work. His innocent belief that the values of Christian brotherly love provide the only guide for a successful life works effectively in his world and, as a result, he has a valid identity in life. Alice Ware, Theron's wife, is devoted to Theron and complements his efforts to further these Christian ideals in their society. At the beginning of the novel, the Wares are assigned to a charge in Octavius, a society which produces conflict in the hero's life and becomes the scene for the hero's trials in the novel. The Octavius congregation, both selfish and narrow-minded, distorts the values of Theron's early rural experience by seeking only for personal profit. When his expressions of Christian love and personal freedom are oppressed, Theron Ware becomes disillusioned with his early

values because they prove so unsuccessful in ministering to this new congregation. This disillusionment signals the beginning of the loss of his innocence, for Theron's unselfish devotion to Christian morality, which is inherent in his background and necessary for his personal contentment, makes him discontent with the morality of his society. In the romance the process of adjustment to this conflict takes the form of the hero's quest.

The Soulsbys, debt-raisers who come to Theron's church, attempt to help Theron discover the means to his proper adjustment. Theron is also befriended by a more intellectual and liberal group composed of Father Forbes, a Catholic priest; Dr. Ledsmar, a scientist; and Celia Madden, a rich and beautiful Irish girl. Following the Soulsby's departure, Theron turns to this group for guidance and from this point in the novel until the conclusion, his character follows a course of steady degeneration. Theron misinterprets the advice of Sister Soulsby and abandons those values which give him a valid identity as a minister early in the novel. In his attempt to gain the degree of culture and worldliness of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden, Theron only succeeds in becoming a pseudo-intellectual. Theron is intellectually incapable of dealing with a situation which challenges the simple values of his rural background. This becomes apparent when Theron

follows Celia Madden to New York City under the illusion they will run away together. When Celia rejects Theron and tells him he is a bore, he becomes aware of his own degeneration, but he does not understand why it has happened. The tragedy of the novel is that Theron will probably never understand the reason for his failure.

Because Theron can never understand the reason for his downfall, he will never complete his quest for an identity in life. At the beginning of the novel Theron fails as a minister when he is unable to maintain his innocence. He then tries to assume the role of the intellectual and romantic lover, which is destroyed when he confronts Celia in New York City. Out of a sense of guilt, Theron then attempts to reapply the values of his original innocence by playing the role of the fallen sinner, but he fails in an attempt to take his own life. At the novel's conclusion, Theron dreams of becoming a politician in Seattle, Washington. There is, however, every indication that he will fail again.

The archetypal figures of the romance tradition are present in the novel. The forces of good, those who attempt to help Theron in his quest, are Sister Soulsby and Alice Ware. Fulfilling the role of the mythical mother figure, Sister Soulsby is experienced in life and

consoles and encourages Theron through his early period of disillusionment by attempting to help Theron clarify his difficulties and discover a more effective way of applying his Christian ethics to his role in society.

Alice Ware becomes the fair maiden figure in the novel by virtue of her unchanging faithfulness. She serves to remind Theron of his early Christian ethic, an ethic he must return to if he is to resolve the problems of his quest.

The archetypal figures of evil, those who represent an obstacle to the hero's adjustment, are Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden. Father Forbes fulfills the role of the pagan priest, Dr. Ledsmar, the atheistic scientist, and Celia Madden, the temptress or the dark lady. Because the unique background of these characters proves irresistibly attractive to Theron, he abandons his own concept of reality by attempting to adopt their values in place of his own. In this way Theron believes that he is acquiring an attitude which will make him more successful in his work. In reality, as the omniscient comments of Harold Frederic disclose, Theron is giving up the only genuine identity he is capable of living, i.e., the innocent minister of God. It becomes apparent that, although the archetypal characters necessary for Theron's adjustment are present, the formula of the

romance, the hero's successful journey from innocence to experience, is portrayed as an ironic failure in Frederic's novel. We soon discover that the beneficial archetypal figures, Sister Soulsby and Alice Ware, cannot help Theron, and the evil archetypal figures, Ledsmar, Forbes, and Madden, do not really destroy him.

Harold Frederic's novel, The Damnation of Theron Ware, employs the archetypal figures of the romance in both an ironic and tragic sense. The novel becomes ironic when the traditional forces of the romance fail to help the hero progress from innocence to experience and achieve a real identity in life. The tragic elements of fear and pity are present in the novel's ironic conclusion. As John Raleigh points out, "we are involved with a character whose misapprehension is not about a set of facts but the nature of reality, which is our own deepest, most difficult, and most terrifying problem."⁶

⁶John Henry Raleigh, "Introduction," The Damnation of Theron Ware (New York, 1965), p. viii.

CHAPTER II

THERON WARE'S QUEST AS A ROMANCE HERO

The romance novel traces the successful progress of the hero through a series of conflicts at the end of which he gains an understanding of himself which allows him to find an identity in the world he comes to believe is reality. His simple, yet honest ideals, identify him as the innocent having the initial ideals of the romance hero. If The Damnation of Theron Ware were patterned after the successful romance, Theron would be exposed to an experience with reality and eventually readjust to the new identity of an experienced or matured hero. Some elements of the romance, such as characters who fulfill roles of archetypal figures serving to help the hero distinguish between the realities and illusions of his world, exist in the novel. However, they only confuse Theron with their advice and he never gains a successful relationship or identity with the real world of his conflict. The objective narration of Harold Frederic contrasts Theron's erroneous judgment of reality with reality as it actually exists. However, Frederic does not explain why the archetypal figures fail to help

Theron understand and adjust to the nature of his real world. The impersonal description of Theron Ware's damnation places Frederic in the mode of the ironic fiction writer. Northrop Frye says that the author who employs irony in his work "takes life exactly as he finds it" ... "he tells a story without moralizing and has no object but his subject."⁷ The false promise of a romance conclusion develops the irony and ultimate tragedy of Theron Ware's fall from innocence.

Richard Chase states that the American form of the archetypal myth is patterned after the successful progress of the hero in the romance narrative which has a theme generally defined as "a fall from innocence and the initiation into life - an action of the soul that involves a symbolic dying and rebirth."⁸ This cycle is best illustrated in Harold Frederic's earlier romance novel, Seth's Brother's Wife. The rustic values of Seth Fairchild (the hero) are challenged when he leaves the farm to work on a city newspaper. A series of trials, involving his near seduction by his brother's wife, comprises his experience. Realizing the error of his judgment, he re-establishes his identity with his old values in his new environment, thus

⁷Frye, p. 41

⁸Richard Chase, The American Novel and its Tradition (New York, 1957), p. 244.

bringing about his rebirth. Seth is rewarded with the editorship of the newspaper. But this is the poetic justice employed in the sentimental romance and is secondary to his rebirth. The importance of this novel as a romance is that Seth comes to appreciate the worth of his earlier values in obtaining a personal identity with his society. Finally he learns to effectively reapply these values to maintain his new identity.

Like Seth Fairchild, Theron must admit to himself his own inadequacies and in this way find a new identity that admits to a loss of innocence. This new identity must carry with it a working system of values which will allow Theron to function as an experienced member of society just as the ministry allows him to function as an innocent. When Theron is identified as an innocent minister of God, in the early part of the novel, his work in the ministry is successful both for his own happiness and the happiness of those who come in contact with him. When Theron loses his faith in the world as guided by a Christian God, his world loses order and meaning. Because Theron never regains a sense of identity of any kind with his world, he fails as a romance hero.

Theron's early success as a minister is due to his unselfish devotion to the values of the church and the ministry. His rural congregations prize him "for his in-

nocent candor and guileless mind, for his good heart, his pious zeal" and "his modesty about gifts notable above the average."⁹ Abram Beekman, a wealthy citizen of one of these early rural pastorates, takes a fatherly interest in the Wares and saves them from embarrassing financial debt by "wiping off all their old scores for them," and giving them "a fresh start in life" (p. 23). Beekman's help is not simply good fortune for he "had watched them (the Wares) and heard a good deal about them" (p. 23). Impressed by Theron's sincerity, Beekman's interest becomes typical of the social support which makes Theron's ministry a meaningful influence in his society.

This same sort of social support continues to help Theron during the first period of his ministry in Octavius. As long as he is able to maintain his "innocent, simple genuine young character," he wins the hearts of those about him who recognize his sincerity. Thus, Theron continues to have an effective role or identity in his society. Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden, intellectuals who shun the society of Octavius as "raw,

⁹Harold Frederic, The Damnation of Theron Ware (New York, 1965), p. 19. (Hereafter, page references to The Damnation of Theron Ware will be included in the text of the paper and will refer to this edition).

overgrown (and) empty-headed," welcome the company of Theron Ware (p. 98). Dr. Ledsmar, a misanthropic scientist, invites Theron to visit his home and adds: "I suppose you are the first man I have asked in a dozen years" (p. 79). Celia Madden tells Theron: "You are full of poetry, of ideas, of generous, unselfish impulses. You see the human, the warm-blooded side of things" (p. 99). Michael Madden, Celia's dying brother, believes the very sight of Theron's face "makes one believe in pure thoughts and merciful deeds" (p. 301). Similar qualities win Theron the support of Levi Gorringer, one of the more honest church elders, and Sister Soulsby.

Theron Ware's approach to the reality of his world as an innocent is successful because of his sincere belief in a supernatural guiding force in his life. Joseph Campbell states that a supernatural force is an important guide for the romance hero in the completion of his quest:

...the hero is covertly aided by advice, amulets, and the secret agents of the supernatural helper whom he met before he entered the region of his trials.¹⁰

Believing his supernatural helper is God, Theron approaches his life experiences with humility, describing himself as an "extremely ignorant and rudely untrained young man, whose pretensions to intellectual authority among any edu-

¹⁰Campbell, p. 97.

cated people would be laughed at with deserved contempt" (p. 60). But Theron is encouraged and directed by the belief that his importance as a contributing individual is "in the hands of the Lord" (p. 12).

The extent of Theron's faith in God's guidance is made clear at the beginning of the novel when he fails to receive the charge in Tecumseh at the Nedahma Conference, a position he feels he rightfully deserves. Theron comforts his wife with a quotations from "Romans": "We must take our turn and be patient. For 'we know all things work together for the good'" (p. 12). The complete quotation from "Romans" reads: "And we know that all things work together for the good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose."¹¹ It is Theron's belief that all things work together for God's purpose which allows him to surmount the disappointments challenging the innocence of his early faith. God's purpose gives Theron's world a direction and order.

Theron is an attractive personality because of his tendency to consider the favorable aspects of his experience and to disregard the unpleasant conditions of reality which do not support his optimistic attitude. As Celia Madden looks back on Theron's early innocence she

¹¹"The Book of Romans," The Holy Bible, King James Version (Glasgow, 1959), p. 155 (ch. 8, ver. 29).

remarks:

"It was like a smell of early spring in the country to come in contact with you. Your honesty of nature, your sincerity in that absurd religion of yours, your general naivete of mental and spiritual get-up, all pleased us a great deal" (p. 326).

This "general naivete of mental and spiritual get-up" is clearly apparent in Theron's impressions of the Nedahma Conference. Harold Frederic's omniscient narration describes the church members waiting to hear the appointments as "broad, dense masses" (p. 3). The ministers, the "black-coated humanity," who sit at the front of the church grind "their teeth and restlessly shuffle their feet in impatience" (p. 4), help to increase the oppressiveness of the scene. The elderly ministers "hear again the published record of their uselessness and of their dependence upon church charity" (p. 5). Theron Ware's memories of the Conference differ sharply from this objective description. Frederic describes Theron's feelings in an optimistic, if not inspirational, regard:

The influence of the Conference, with its songs and seasons of prayer and high pressure of emotional excitement, was still strong upon him. It seemed years and years since the religious side of him had been so stirred into motion (p. 24).

Theron continues to look for the brighter aspects of his situation as he views the disorder of his new parsonage in Octavius. Through Frederic's omniscient comment is portrayed a yard filled with "parts of broken barrels

and packing boxes, and nameless debris of tin cans, clamshells, and general rubbish" (p. 15). Theron chooses to disregard all of this for the more pleasant aspects of the spring morning.

The young minister stroked his chin thoughtfully and let his gaze wander over the backyard in silence. ...It was pleasanter to lift the eyes, and look across the neighbor's fences to the green, waving tops of the elms on the street beyond...

Inspired comments support the expression of a belief in God's continual presence in his world.

Theron lifted his thin, long-fingered hand, and passed it in a slow arch of movement to comprehend this glorious upper picture.

"What matter anyone's ideas of hell," he said, in soft, grave tones, "when we have that to look at, and listen to, and fill our lungs with? It seems to me that we never feel quite so sure of God's goodness at other times as we do in these wonderful new mornings of spring" (pp. 15-16).

Theron again establishes, and maintains, order in his world by choosing to regard only the more optimistic qualities of his situation -- his faith in a divine presence.

Although the situation in Octavius worsens for Theron, he does not lose his faith in the pattern of a divinely ordered world. Because of his innocence, Theron continually looks for something good to happen which will rectify his inability to minister to his congregation. Theron's innocence does prove effective in the solution to his problem for when the Soulsbys arrive in Octavius, they

choose to help Theron because they are attracted by his innocence and sincerity. The Soulsbys achieve a good, or a desired end, in Theron's world in an attempt to help him better his position. However, they achieve the good by what Theron would consider immoral means. Because Theron accepts the Soulsbys' methods, he is forced to modify his system of values to include the Soulsbys' immoral methods as constructive agents or forces of good in his world. Theron's quest as a romance hero begins when he discovers that the immoral methods of achieving a Christian end are more effective than the moral methods of his early innocence. When Sister Soulsby skillfully manipulates his congregation into giving more money to retire the church debt, Theron feels his own methods of influencing his congregation are both absurd and ineffective.

When Theron rejects the values of his early innocence, he must find a new identity. Because he has taken part in the deception of his own congregation, he feels intellectually superior to them. Consequently, after Sister Soulsby's departure, Theron turns to Celia Madden, Dr. Ledsmar and Father Forbes, where he hopes to find a new identity as an intellectual. His immediate attachment to the more intellectual group of Forbes, Ledsmar and Madden is a logical one because Theron must necessarily be

more knowledgeable about the workings of his world. However, Theron is ironically attracted to this group for the wrong reasons. He does not attempt to become an intellectual because he feels the methods of the group are morally good, but rather because he feels their methods are immoral. Sister Soulsby showed Theron that immoral actions provide the best method of obtaining Christian ends. Theron therefore comes to believe that the success of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden could only have been accomplished through immoral means. However, because his acceptance of this method is contrary to his basically moral nature, it results in his downfall. Theron is intellectually incapable of appreciating that Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar and Celia Madden pursue their various interests because they believe their methods and their goals to be morally good.

Because Theron is only of average intelligence, his genuine humility concerning his own capabilities prior to his meeting with the Soulsbys, or Forbes, Madden and Ledsmar, provide him with the necessary self-appraisal which makes him successful as a minister. When Theron feels that, due to his superior talents, he is above the judgment of the Octavius congregation, he deceives himself. By deceiving himself, he becomes unsure of his real capabilities and loses any genuine working relationship

with his world.

The ultimate stifling effect of self-pride on Theron's development is apparent from the beginning of the novel. At the Nedahma Conference, the Wares learn that the congregation of the Tecumseh Church, the largest church in the Conference, is impressed with Theron's sermon and want him to receive the Tecumseh charge. Frederic describes the Ware's reaction to this as follows:

But unhappily they [Theron and Alice Ware] had come to know the effort being made to bring them to Tecumseh; and their simple pride in the triumph of the husband's fine sermon had become swallowed up in a terribly anxious conflict of hope and fear (p. 8).

When Theron becomes concerned with material rewards, he abandons his earlier work of perfecting his talents as a minister. By accepting the immoral methods employed by the Soulsbys, Theron no longer trusts the working of his world to God's providence. Theron's social success in this new role ultimately results in a self-defeat brought about by the application of values which are basically in opposition to his Christian nature. Consequently, because Theron Ware fails to understand that he can never successfully fulfill an identity which is in conflict with his original Christian values, he cannot complete the quest outlined in the romance because he sees its logical end as being immoral. The end of the quest appears immoral to

Theron because of his lack of intelligence.

John Raleigh states: "There is a Theron Ware in all of us, a capacity for pride and its consequence, damnation."¹² In Theron's case it is the pride of intellect which alienates him from the realities of his world. Theron's fate becomes ironic when he is led to destruction by the advice of those who would help him. The irony of Theron's situation becomes tragic when he is unable to understand the reason for his fall and it becomes apparent that he will continue to suffer because of the illusion that he is better than average. Because this is an illusion which may be typical of any member of his society, Theron becomes what Northrop Frye describes as the hero of the tragic irony, who becomes the "pharmakos" or the "scapegoat." This hero seems to be chosen by fate or chance to suffer for an inadequacy which might very well identify any member of his society. Frye goes on to say:

Irony isolates from the tragic situation the sense of arbitrariness, of the victim's having been unlucky, selected at random or by lot, and no more deserving of what happens to him than anyone else would be. If there is a reason for choosing him for the catastrophe, it is an inadequate reason, and raises more objections than it answers.¹³

¹² Raleigh, p. vii.

¹³ Frye, p. 150.

At the Nedahma Conference, the opening scene in the novel, arbitrary circumstances seem to be controlling Theron's appointment to Octavius. The congregation watched the selection of the ministers as if "they were watching for...the announcement of the lucky numbers in a great lottery" (p. 3). The Bishop who read out the ministers' assignments was "indifferent alike to the joy and to the dismay which he was scattering among the divines before him" (pp. 8-9). Theron and Alice are described as sitting "waiting" along with the rest to hear "their fate" (p. 8). Finally, the prize pastorate of the Conference, the Tecumseh church, receives as "a suitable champion for the fierce Presbyterian competition" in the community, Abram Tisdale - "a spindling, rickety, gaunt old man, with a long horse-like head and vacantly solemn face, who kept one or the other of his hands continually fumbling his bony jaw" (pp. 7&9). The Tecumseh congregation felt that the only logical explanation for their ill fortune was that "Tisdale was the Bishop's cousin." However, Frederic informs the reader that "this did not happen to be true," further emphasizing the ironic and illogical fate working at the beginning of the novel. (p. 10)

Further irony becomes apparent when the archetypal characters of good and evil present in the novel do not ultimately resolve the quest of the romance hero.

Because these archetypal characters, whether they are deceptive, cynical, or optimistic, are consistent and honest about their individual attitudes, Frederic is able to use them as a backdrop for the evolving attitudes of the hero, Theron Ware. True to the ironic mode, Frederic portrays the influence of these characters objectively. It is only through the impressions of Theron Ware that these archetypal influences take form and gain importance. Initially, Alice Ware and the Soulsbys appear to be archetypal figures of good and for the successful completion of the hero's quest. Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden appear to be archetypal figures of evil and against the success of the hero's quest. As a result of Theron's changing impressions of reality, the archetypal figures seem to change roles in the hero's thinking. Sister Soulsby, who is first considered a "debt-raiser," becomes the mythical mother figure whom Theron reveres for advice and sympathy. Alice Ware, the fair maiden figure who provides Theron with helpful companionship early in the novel, is rejected by Theron for her lack of culture and intellectual ability. Celia Madden, whom Theron first considers a temptress embodying the evils of seduction, later becomes his picture of the ideal woman.

Although these characters change their roles in Theron's thinking, they remain true to the archetypes of the romance tradition through the objective presentation

of the novel -- they carry out their assignments affecting the hero with forces of good and evil. Frederic develops their demonic or benevolent qualities through the early impressions of the hero, Theron Ware. The archetypal qualities of Sister Soulsby, Alice Ware, and Celia Madden play a major role in the development of the novel as a tragic irony. Their characteristics are dealt with in detail at a later point in this discussion. However, the development of Theron's initial attitude toward Father Forbes and Dr. Ledsmar will be helpful in illustrating how archetypal figures and patterns are introduced and employed in the novel's tragic and ironic theme.

The demonic qualities of Father Forbes and Dr. Ledsmar place them in a category with what Leslie Fiedler calls the "Devil-Father" of the Faustian hero. Like Mephistopheles, Forbes and Ledsmar stand for the cold pursuit of knowledge.¹⁴ Faust evokes Mephistopheles for further intellectual wisdom and satisfaction in life. Theron calls upon the guidance of Father Forbes and Dr. Ledsmar to lift him out "of contact with low minds," and place him in "an intellectual world, a world of culture and grace, of lofty thoughts and inspiring communion of real knowledge" (pp. 134-135). Theron's desire for knowledge is his fatal weakness and because of it he begins his fall

¹⁴Leslie Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel (New York, 1960), p. 420.

from innocence. Joseph Campbell states: "Goethe presents the masculine guide in Faust as Mephistopheles and not infrequently the dangerous 'mercurial' figure is stressed: for he is the lure of the innocent soul into the realms of trial."¹⁵ Father Forbes and Dr. Ledsmar assume "mercurial" or changing qualities through the impressions of Theron Ware. This characterizes Theron's inability to judge their potentially destructive influence.

Theron's first visit to the Catholic pastorate gives the impression of a journey into Hell. Maggie, Father Forbes' Irish maidservant, is not unlike Milton's conception of Sin, the half-female, half-serpent creature who guards the gates of Hell in Paradise Lost.

He noted now that the woman, who had bustled down the hall on her errand, was gray-haired and incredibly ugly, with a dark sour face, glowing black eyes, and a twisted mouth (pp. 65-66).

This "elderly Gorgon" figure leads Theron into a chamber filled with demonic imagery. At first Theron sees nothing but the "central glare of dazzling light beating down from a great shaded lamp upon a circular patch of white table linen" (p. 66). This "glowing circle" is characteristic of the "sinister circle" Northrop Frye describes as a geometrical image counter part to the demonic world.¹⁶

¹⁵Campbell, p. 43.

¹⁶Frye, p. 150.

It can be compared to the burning marble of the lime kiln, a symbol of Hell in Hawthorne's Ethan Brand, which forms a "flaming magic circle."¹⁷ The silver and the porcelain on the table appear as points of fire and two glasses of wine reflect like "burning crimson" across the white table cloth (p. 66). Outside this dazzling ring of light, Father Forbes and Dr. Ledsmar appear in the "vague darkness" which encompasses the rest of the chamber giving the impression of the "darkness visible" which illuminates Milton's Hell in Paradise Lost.

Fiedler's statement of "the cold pursuit of power and knowledge" which is characteristic of the "Devil-Father" figure is similar to the atmosphere which Theron feels surrounding both Forbes and Ledsmar. Father Forbes' study contains a "profusion of scholarly symbols" which include "great dark rows of encased and crowded book-shelves rising to the ceiling" (p. 69). In Dr. Ledsmar's home "bookcases, chairs, tables, the corners of the floor, [are] all buried deep under disorderly strata of papers, diagrams, and open books" (p. 220).

The intellectual pursuits of Father Forbes and Dr. Ledsmar imply the archetypal sin of the Faustian hero's quest. This is characteristic of the Mephistophlean in-

¹⁷Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Ethan Brand," The American Tradition in Literature, Bradley, Beatty, and Long, editors (New York, 1956), p. 547.

fluence which Maude Bodkin refers to as the negation of the "'romantic' value of love."¹⁸ Hawthorne states this most clearly in his description of the "unpardonable sin" in Ethan Brand -- "The sin of an intellect that [triumphs] over the sense of brotherhood with man and reverence with God, and [sacrifices] everything to its mighty claims!"¹⁹ Both Forbes and Ledsmar appear to lack this "sense of brotherhood with man and reverence with God." This becomes apparent when Father Forbes neglects the petitions of his parishioners to sit in his study and pursue his own pleasures with the company of Theron Ware and Dr. Ledsmar. Toward the conclusion of the novel Theron is ignored by Forbes and Ledsmar in much the same manner. This action is typical of Northrop Frye's description of the "demonic human world" -- a "society held together by a kind of molecular tension of egos, a loyalty to the group or the leader which diminishes the individual."²⁰ Father Forbes' cynicism about the worth of human society is emphasized to a greater degree at a later point in the novel when he says: "...of all our fictions there is none so utterly baseless and empty as this

¹⁸Maud Bodkin, Archetypal Images in Poetry (London, 1963), p. 225.

¹⁹Hawthorne, p. 540.

²⁰Frye, p. 147.

idea that humanity progresses" (p. 244).

Dr. Ledsmar illustrates the same disregard for the worth of humanity when he includes his Chinaman, whom he uses in scientific experimentation, in the same category with his dogs, cats, and lizards. (Toward the conclusion of the novel Ledsmar places Theron in the lizard category.) However, the character of Dr. Ledsmar is more illustrative of the Mephistophelean "negation of the romantic value in life." This becomes clear when he is repulsed by Celia Madden's organ music. He tells Theron "that the only animals who make the noises we call music are of the bird family, -- a debased off-shoot of the reptilian creation, -- the very lowest type of vertebrata now in existence" (p. 80). Ledsmar considers all art a form of decay and responsible for the corruption of every potentially great race of men.

Both Father Forbes and Dr. Ledsmar fulfill the requirements of the demonic archetype. This is accomplished through the impressions of Theron Ware and illustrates his romantic categorizing of the experience of his world. If these characters seem to change in the course of the novel, it is only because Theron's impression of them changes. Although all the archetypal figures appear to change their position of either being for or against the hero's quest at different stages of the novel, these characters are really

quite static -- they state their attitude early in the novel and do not vary from their expressed opinions. Theron's initial judgment of them is valid. He has good reason to fear Ledsmar, Forbes, and Madden as harmful figures. For although they may be sincere about their own beliefs, their influence upon Theron will be detrimental to the successful completion of his quest. The static quality which characterizes the archetypal figures in the novel provides a foil for Theron's character which is changing. Theron's changing attitude toward Sister Soulsby, Alice Ware, Ledsmar, Forbes, and Madden makes it plain that he is not progressing toward the successful completion of his quest. We come to see that Theron is not intelligent enough to realize that the characters whom he feels are helping him the most are ironically bringing about his downfall.

CHAPTER III

SISTER SOULSBY: MYTHICAL MOTHER FIGURE

Sister Soulsby is the first character in The Damnation of Theron Ware who attempts to help Theron adjust to his new environment in Octavius. She comes to Octavius at a time when Theron is undergoing difficult problems with his congregation. By frequently visiting the homes of his church members and working hard to preach inspiring sermons, Theron hopes to win the confidence of his congregation and raise enough money to pay the church debt. At first, he is suspicious of the Soulsbys because of their role as "debt-raisers." Theron feels they will appeal to the emotions of the church members solely as a means for raising money with no concern for the congregation's spiritual development. However, Theron approves of Sister Soulsby when she is able to accomplish the good which he had unsuccessfully attempted to bring about by himself. Sister Soulsby also respects Theron for his sincere efforts to develop an effective ministry in Octavius,

but she also realizes that if Theron is to be ultimately successful, he must become aware of the unchristian nature of his society and learn to use this knowledge to the best advantage of himself and his work. Sister Soulsby consoles Theron in his confusion about Octavius and attempts to help him find a more practical morality than that of his innocence.

The Soulsbys' experience in life is totally different from Theron's rustic background. Unlike the sheltered Theron Ware, they have experienced the sham and illusion of life. Having worked on the stage, in comic opera, telling fortunes, and posing as professional mediums, they have become artists of deception, exemplifying characters of the picaresque literary mode. They are characters who have adapted to the continually changing values of their experience; i.e., they have discovered an identity in their world which allows them to use their abilities to the best advantage. Their attitude toward the continually changing views of their society is one of acceptance rather than judgment. This is the type of attitude Northrop Frye attributes to the eiron figure of irony and satire -- one who follows "the tried and tested way of life, who does not question the logic of social convention, but merely follows the procedures which in fact do serve to maintain one's

balance from one day to the next."²¹ What Frye terms "flexible pragmatism," Sister Soulsby calls "the wisdom of the serpent" (p. 144).²² The Soulsbys realize a certain amount of "dirty work" is involved in obtaining desirable ends, but this does not make them overly pessimistic or bitter. As Sister Soulsby states, to say that all of life is dirty work, one "might just as well say that potatoes are unclean and unfit to eat because manure is put into the ground they grow in" (p. 172-73). It is Sister Soulsby's realization that "the real wisdom is to school yourself to move along smoothly, and not fret, and get the best of what's going," which allows her to work constructively in the world of conflicting values -- the same world in which Theron Ware found himself in *Octavius* (p. 174).

The Soulsbys' entrance into the work of the church does not alter their method of operation. They continue to employ various techniques of deception to gain their ends. One of their most effective devices is the application of the lyrics of old Methodist hymns to the waltzes, mazurkas, and nocturnes of Chopin to gain attention and mastery over their congregations at money raising services. Sister Soulsby admits the fraud of using Chopin, "a devil-may-care Pole who was living with George Sand openly," to maneuver Christian congregations into a fund raising mood (p. 181). But Theron Ware cannot avoid the simple fact that the Soulsbys are successful and seemingly without harm to anyone.

²¹Ibid., p. 226.

²²Ibid.

He is impressed by the fact that they have become what Sister Soulsby calls "good frauds." She admits that the methods they use may be morally questionable, but the good that they are able to accomplish through these methods is undeniable. Sister Soulsby tells Theron that she is glad "that the change and chance came to help [Brother Soulsby and herself] to be good frauds" (p. 181). By means of their special talents they have been able to turn one of the less desirable, yet necessary jobs of the church into an efficient and, at the same time, inspirational experience.

Sister Soulsby is intelligent enough and experienced enough to realize that Theron Ware's innocent idealism, attractive as it may be, has resulted in a personal conflict between him and his society through which Theron must try to find a more practical identity in his world. Sister Soulsby attempts to help Theron realize the nature of his conflict and establish a more flexible morality which will suit him better for the world of Octavius. Her action in this direction links her to the archetypal figure of the mythical mother in literature. She tells Theron that "young men of brains and high notions," men who would "rather earn the meanest living, at an honest trade, and be free from" an expedient system of adaptation, are eventually broken by their own idealism (p. 175).

Joseph Campbell makes the following comment about the mother figure as she appears in myth and literature:

She is mother, sister, bride. Whatever in the world has lived, whatever has seemed to promise joy, has been premonitory of her existence... For she is the incarnation of the promise of perfection; the soul's assurance that, at the conclusion of its exile in a world of organized inadequacies, the bliss that once was known will be known again: The²³ comforting, the nourishing, the "good mother"...

Sister Soulsby is able to work with the Octavius congregation. Her ability inspires Theron with a new confidence -- confidence that he will become a success in the ministry and achieve greater positions than Octavius can offer him. Thus, Sister Soulsby becomes the first source of Theron's concept of "promised perfection" because she solves Theron's problems with the Octavius church: she raises the money necessary to cover the church debt, inspires the congregation with a religious fervor, and gains for Theron the support of important church officials. Having assumed the role of the mythical mother, Sister Soulsby attempts to guide Theron, initially a hero innocent of "the wisdom of the serpent," by giving him accurate information about his own society and encouragement in helping him adjust to it. Writers contemporary with Frederic, such as Stephen Crane and Henry James, in their novels The Red Badge of Courage and The Ambassadors, incorporate similar qualities in Henry Fleming's mother and Maria Gostry.

²³Campbell, p. 111.

Both of these mother figures possess a more accurate knowledge of reality than either Henry Fleming or Lambert Strether. Henry's mother attempts to dispel her son's romantic illusions concerning the glory of war. Maria Gostry acts as a guide for Strether helping him adjust to the more sophisticated world of European society.²⁴ These women fulfill character roles similar to that of Sister Soulsby, for they have a valid understanding of what the hero will eventually come to discover for himself.

As Sister Soulsby gains Theron's confidence, she not only becomes a mother figure, giving Theron comfort and advice, but she also acts as a new inspirational force in

²⁴Henry Fleming's mother sounds very much like Sister Soulsby as she attempts to educate him with common sense:

"Don't go-a-thinkin' you can lick the hull rebel army at the start, because yeh can't. Yer jest one little feller amoungst a hull lot of others, and yeh've got to keep quiet and do what they tell yeh. I know how you are Henry."

Maria Gostry, in Henry James' The Ambassadors, establishes her role with regard to the action in Part I by appointing herself as Strether's "fated guide" and comfortably telling him: "You can trust me." James employs her guarded comments, concerning Strether's "distinguished" sensitivity and Chad's personal value, in alluding to the character reversal which takes place in the novel. Stephen Crane, The Red Badge of Courage (New York, 1965), p. 242. Henry James, The Ambassadors (New York, 1960), pp.14&15.

his life. At first, the Soulsbys represent the new identity Theron hopes to acquire for himself. When Theron takes a part in the deception of his church, he loses his faith in the divine providence which before had supposedly protected him in his innocence. Sister Soulsby becomes a "Universal Mother" figure and takes the place of the divine providence Theron depended upon in his earlier world of innocence. Joseph Campbell states that the archetypal pattern for this "Universal Mother" is "primarily spontaneous," i. e., it finds its roots in the attitude of the child toward the mother and is manifested in later life in the search for the maternal influence in the world.²⁵ When Sister Soulsby becomes the "maternal influence in the world" for Theron Ware, she, not the Christian God, inspires him with a new strength to continue his quest for a new identity. A major example of this archetypal pattern is illustrated in Maud Bodkin's discussion of the "maternal goddess" with relation to Achilles in the first book of the Illiad. This instance also helps to clarify the significance of Sister Soulsby with regard to Theron Ware's quest. Bodkin states that the purpose of Achilles' mother, Thetis, is not only to show "tenderness to the grief and weakness of her son," but "in communion with her he also repents his

²⁵Campbell, p. 113.

wrath, and curbs his heart in his breast, accepting necessity." This fills the hero with "adventurous might" and he is able to begin his quest again with renewed enthusiasm.²⁶ Following his first period of disillusionment with the Octavius church, Theron is encouraged by Sister Soulsby's consoling words and practical advice. During this time Theron talked:

exclusively to Sister Soulsby, ...and listened and watched her with indolent content. There was a sort of happy and purified languor in his physical and mental being, which needed and appreciated this, -- to...be ministered to by her sprightly conversation, by the flash of her informing and inspiring eyes, and the nameless sense of support and repose which her near proximity exhaled (p. 165).

This type of encouragement fills Theron with the same "adventurous might" Thetis gives Achilles. Theron is comforted and pitied, but he also learns to accept the necessity of what must be done to accomplish his goals in Octavius. Prior to Sister Soulsby's counseling, Theron believed that preaching Christian principles was his primary objective. Now, following Soulsby's example, he feels he must make an effort to influence his congregation by whatever means possible. Inspired by Sister Soulsby, he delivers an exceptionally emotional sermon at the Sunday morning love feast. "Looking down into those big eyes of Sister Soulsby's," Theron receives the inspiration necessary for his success. The "adventurous might" of the hero is

²⁶Bodkin, p. 161.

evident by the effect it produces on the congregation. Thus the inspirational force of the archetypal mother is revealed:

He went on, feeling more and more that the skill and historic power of his best days were returning to him, were as marked as ever, -- nay, had never triumphed before as they were triumphing now. The congregation watched and listened, with open steadfast eyes and parted lips. For the first time in all that weary quarter, their faces shone (p. 153).

The change in Theron, i.e., the loss of his innocence, is evident in his own feelings about the sermon. He no longer feels the joy of having done some good for his congregation. In place of the humility of his innocence, he places himself above those he had previously tried to serve. He has become the deceiver and forsaken the Christian values which gave him a definite identity in his world as an innocent minister of God. As soon as he recognizes that Sister Soulsby's operation is more successful than his own, he must necessarily begin to question the ultimate effectiveness of his Protestant beliefs -- Protestant beliefs which make the Octavius congregation appear ridiculous and silly before the Soulsbys' deception. As a result Theron seeks to identify himself with the Soulsbys by becoming a deceiver himself, and, by means of this deception, elevate himself above the foolishness of his congregation. From this point onward, Theron is only concerned with the use of this deception to further his own personal gains in

the ministry. It is ironic that Sister Soulsby's attempt to help Theron adjust to his world -- the object being that he might continue to be in definite service to his church and to himself -- results in Theron's personal quest for popularity and a condescending regard for those who praise him.

Even though Sister Soulsby's intentions are not successful, she is still consistent as the mythical mother. Her personal standard of morality is consistent and effective. Because Theron lacks the experience and the intelligence of Sister Soulsby, he cannot adjust to his new found power -- his new identity. He fails to understand that the key to Sister Soulsby's successful adjustment lies in the fact that she feels she is doing good. Therefore, her methods, as applied to Octavius or any other church community, are in complete accord with what she feels to be moral procedure. The Soulsbys always leave a community having done the best job possible in a debt-raising service. The church raises the money necessary for the continuation of Christian work and the Soulsbys leave the congregation religiously inspired.

Because Theron is the product of a closed-minded Protestant upbringing, he feels that if Sister Soulsby's methods are not moral, then the object of her methods is immoral. To Theron, either an action is totally right or

it is totally wrong; there can be no middle ground. Thus, when Theron accepts the Soulsbys' methods, he feels he is adopting an unchristian set of values. His attitude, according to his own system of values, is an immoral one -- one which he cannot identify with without losing his original identity as a minister. This is because his role as a deceiver is against his own basic idea of a moral relationship to his world. Because Theron is not intelligent enough to appreciate the morality in Sister Soulsby's actions, he can only successfully identify with the values of an innocent minister of God.

It is ironic that Theron Ware's Protestant ethic condemns characters (Sister Soulsby, Celia Madden, Father Forbes and Dr. Ledsman) who are true to their own standard of values. Because Sister Soulsby is consistently moral and repeatedly works to help Theron out of his confusion, she fulfills her role as a mythical mother. This becomes most apparent at the novel's conclusion when she accepts Theron into her home in an attempt to help him overcome his painful disillusionment. The scene in the Illiad where Thetis comes to comfort her son Achilles is again helpful in defining Sister Soulsby's maternal compassion for Theron's own conflict. As Maud Bodkin shows, the mother extends tenderness and grief toward the weakness of her son. Thetis sat:

before her weeping son, and stroked him with her

hand, and spoke and called on his name: "My child, why weepest thou? What sorrow hath entered into thy heart? Speak it forth, ²⁷hide it not in thy mind, that both may know it.

An almost identical scene occurs between Theron Ware and Sister Soulsby at the conclusion of the novel. Following the painful ordeal of Celia's rejection and two days and a night of drunken wandering through New York City, Theron comes to Sister Soulsby for counsel and sympathy. Her first words to him are:

"Tell me about it, Theron," she said calmly, and with a soothing, motherly intonation in her voice (p. 336).

and then:

with a soft, maternal touch, she smoothed the hair from his forehead into order. Then she seated herself, and, when he got his hand out from under the robe and thrust it forth timidly, she took it in hers and held it in a warm, sympathetic grasp (p. 336).

Theron Ware's pathetic and helpless state at the conclusion of the novel marks his failure to understand and apply to his own life what Sister Soulsby refers to as "the wisdom of the serpent," her "flexible pragmatism." Although Sister Soulsby is the initial inspiration of this quest, she is unable to fulfill her role as a mythical mother because Theron is unable to understand and use her guidance in the solution of his own problems. When Theron attempts to apply this wisdom, he falls in the es-

²⁷Ibid., p. 161.

teem of everyone who had previously admired him for the consistency of his innocent morality. From the time Theron meets Sister Soulsby until the conclusion of the novel, he is alienated from every element of his society, from the very wealthy Celia Madden, to the "worst people" in the "low bar-rooms and dance-houses" of New York City (p. 339). Because Sister Soulsby is consistent in her role as a mythical mother, the results of her efforts are both ironic and tragic. As George Johnson notes, Sister Soulsby's efforts to help Theron have only succeeded in blurring "his moral sense without dissipating his need for absolutes; and her blandishment has supplied his ego with an over compensating pride which impels him to disaster."²⁸

²⁸George W. Johnson, "Harold Frederic's Young Goodman Ware: The Ambiguities of a Realistic Romance," *Modern Fiction Studies*, VIII, 4 (Winter, 1962-63), p.365.

CHAPTER IV

ALICE WARE AND CELIA MADDEN: THE FAIR MAIDEN AND THE DARK LADY

The figures of the "Fair Maiden" and the "Dark Lady," as represented by Alice Ware and Celia Madden, have a significant influence upon the quest of Theron Ware as a romance hero. Traditionally, the role of these characters as archetypal figures of the romance is not complex. Northrop Frye points out:

Characters tend to be either for or against the quest. If they assist it they are idealized as simply gallant or pure; if they obstruct it they are caricatured as simply villainous or cowardly. Hence every typical character in romance tends to have his moral opposite confronting him...²⁹

In the Damnation of Theron Ware, Alice Ware and Celia Madden appear as opposing forces of good and evil -- the traditional feminine opposites who affect the moral and social developments of the romance hero. Alice Ware, the fair maiden, is for the quest. She embodies the attributes of innocence and sincerity which enable Theron to achieve success early in his work. She is loyal to Theron and

²⁹Frye, p. 195.

understands that he is to continue to win the admiration and praise of his congregation, and he must maintain his Christian humility and devotion toward his ministry. In contrast to Alice, Celia Madden becomes the dark lady or the temptress of Frederic's novel. Celia Madden's moral standard is based upon the world of cultural experience -- a world very much apart from the rural simplicity which fostered Theron and Alice Ware. She is attracted to Theron because of his innocence and his complete identification with the work of the church. Like Sister Soulsby, Celia first befriends Theron out of respect for his dedication to the ministry. As their relationship progresses, the acquisition of Celia's love comes to represent a decisive step upward in Theron's quest for personal betterment. Following Sister Soulsby's departure, Theron seeks to further his own personal career rather than minister to his congregation. Theron is attracted both by Celia's physical beauty and her more mature understanding of life. As a result, he aspires to a new cultural and intellectual identity which will make him worthy of her. In his attempt to be worthy of Celia Madden, Theron tries to assume the role of a romantic lover. This identity, as well as the one he attempts to achieve with Sister Soulsby, the deceiver, is opposed to the teachings of his Protestant background. In both cases,

because Theron is not morally flexible enough to accept these roles as legitimate identities in his world, he sacrifices those qualities which marked his success as an innocent minister of God. As the fair maiden, Alice Ware embodies the qualities which are representative of the only possible role for Theron -- that of an innocent minister. Celia Madden becomes the dark lady or the temptress, for she is at least partially responsible for Theron's failure to maintain his position in the ministry.

Much of Theron's success in the ministry, before he comes to Octavius, is due to the inspiration he receives from Alice. As the fair maiden, she is the symbol of everything good Theron accomplishes in his innocence, and traditionally the promise of his future success and development. She is able to maintain an identity with her Christian values throughout the periods of difficult problems in Octavius. Her nature is described simply as "kind and sweet" -- the product of a rural farming background. Alice's talents have been refined and developed in a town seminary. By the time Theron meets her, she has been trained according to the highest ideals of her rural and social community. Frederic describes her as follows:

She was fresh from the refinements of a town seminary: she read books; it was known that she could play the piano. Her clothes, her manners, her way of speaking, the readiness of her thoughts and sprightly tongue, -- not least, perhaps, the imposing current understanding as

to her father's wealth, -- placed her on a glorified pinnacle far away from the girls of the neighborhood (p. 17).

Alice Ware acts as a source of inspiration in Theron's early identity as an innocent. She can be compared to the divine providence Theron believes to support him through his early difficulties giving his life order and meaning. Alice enriches Theron's solemn character in the first years of their marriage with a fresh cheerfulness which not only brings Theron satisfaction, but "obviously [involves] increased claims to popularity among his parishioners, and consequently [magnifies] his powers of usefulness." (p. 20) To Theron, she becomes "the crowning blessedness of his youth," and is responsible for a period of "incredible fructification and output" (pp. 17&21).

As the fair maiden, Alice Ware is synonymous with the Christian values of her rural society and she becomes a symbol of moral thinking which is responsible for Theron's contentment prior to his experience in Octavius. As Theron faces the new problems in Octavius, he reassures himself of the support Alice provided in working out past difficulties:

Looking back upon those past troubles, he persuaded himself that he had borne them all with a light and cheerful heart, simply because Alice had been one with him in every thought and emotion (p. 37).

In this very early period Alice serves to support Theron's

belief in a divine providence, reminding him of the necessity of maintaining this belief for his own betterment in Octavius. In this role she becomes what Frye refers to as the "Lady of Duty" as opposed to the temptress, or the "Lady of Pleasure."³⁰ Because she continues to work for the hero's successful completion of his quest even after he rejects her, Alice becomes most important as the lady of duty after Theron loses his innocence. She does not understand the reason for her own rejection, but she is able to sense Theron's aloofness and realizes that the change in his character decreases his ability to be of value in his ministry. Shortly after Sister Soulsby's departure, Alice remarks to Theron: "...it was nicer in the old days, before you bothered your head about big projects, and your career, as you call it, and were just a good, earnest, simple young servant of the Lord" (p. 209). Because Theron no longer identifies with Alice, she cannot be effective in helping him. This is not because she has failed in her role as a fair maiden, or as the lady of duty. Alice's continual attempt to make Theron aware of the undesirable change in his attitude is consistent with her character role as the fair maiden in the novel. Ironically, the hero is not able to appreciate the fair maiden because of his own deficiencies and not because of

³⁰Ibid., p. 196.

of hers.

Because of Theron Ware's inability to understand the degeneration in his own character, he becomes the fallen hero at the novel's conclusion. He has failed to complete his quest and still suffers the inability to understand the reason for his failure. He does realize, however, that his attempt to win the love of Celia Madden was a disastrous mistake. In retrospect he remembers the happiness and inspiration Alice had given him before his problems began. In this way, Theron becomes typical of the hero who, in the midst of his quest, desires a return to the faithful wife or maiden of his youth. Odysseus is the most prominent literary example of this archetypal experience. In Homer's Odyssey, Penelope serves as a reminder to Odysseus of the lost happiness of his youth. Pallas Athena, Odysseus' mythical mother, hears the cries of Odysseus, after "many bitter and shattering experiences," for his "wise Penelope" and "beloved Ithica."³¹

His eyes were wet with weeping, as they always were. Life with its sweetness was ebbing away in the tears for his lost home. For the Nymph [Odysseus' lady of pleasure] had long since ceased to please.³²

Theron, too, has progressed through a difficult period of "bitter and shattering experiences" and recognizes the loss

³¹Homer, The Odyssey, trans. E. V. Rieu (Baltimore, 1946), p. 93.

³²Ibid., p. 96.

of his early happiness with Alice. As Theron laments to his mythical mother, Sister Soulsby, we discover that Alice, like Penelope in The Odyssey, is a central figure in his memory of better days.

We were poor, Alice and I, and people behaved rather hard toward us, and sometimes we were a little down in the mouth about it; but that was all. We were really happy; and I -- I really was a good man (pp. 339-340).

However helpful Alice's sense of duty and devotion may have been for Theron in his early period of innocence, her influence fails utterly when he is confronted by the dark lady or the temptress, Celia Madden. For Theron, Celia represents a new world of experience. She becomes the image of culture, beauty, and intelligence. Theron recognizes Celia's cultural superiority, and, rejecting Alice's loyalty as inconsequential, he strives to be worthy of Celia's love. Because of the influence Celia's background and talents have on the hero, she becomes the dark lady of the romance. Northrop Frye characterizes this archetypal figure as a "fierce destructive passion that works against loyalty or frustrates the one who possesses it."³³ Theron's ambition to ascend to a higher intellectual level is first inspired by Sister Soulsby and then strengthened by Theron's desire to win the love of Celia Madden. Celia becomes Theron's new "incarnation of promised perfection." It is, therefore, only logical that

³³Frye, p. 149.

Theron should reject the loyalty of Alice Ware as "silly" and "meaningless," for Theron feels that winning Celia's love will achieve his quest for personal success and enlightenment (p. 158). Celia's cultural achievement places her in an altogether different world from Alice Ware, thus making Alice less attractive in light of Theron's ambitions. Frederic describes Celia as follows:

...a tall, handsome, confident young woman, swift of tongue and apprehension, appearing to know everything there was to know by the most learned, able to paint pictures, carve wood, speak in diverse languages, and make music for the gods, yet with it all a very proud lady, one might say a queen (p. 90).

The traditional role of the dark lady in American literature is best described by Leslie Fiedler when he characterizes her as representative of "the hunger of the Protestant, Anglo-Saxon male...for rich sexuality, the dangerous warmth he had rejected as unworthy of his wife." She is usually portrayed as an exotic character, exemplifying those elements in her make-up which are foreign to the hero's experience. It is for this reason, Fiedler states, "the black woman is typically Catholic or Jew, Latin or Oriental or Negro." Fiedler goes on to say:

...whenever the dark lady plays a serious role in our American literature, she is likely to represent either our relationship with the enslaved Africa in our midst or with the Mediterranean Europe from which our culture began; she is surrogate for all the

otherness against which an Anglo-Saxon world attempts to define itself and a Protestant one to justify its existence.³⁴

Celia Madden is ideally suited for the role of the dark lady in Frederic's novel. Her race, religion, and cultural background are in direct contrast to the hero who is Anglo-Saxon, protestant, and rural. The emotional quality of the Irish or Celtic race is totally foreign to Theron's experience. As Father Forbes comments, the Celt "has in his blood an excess of impulsive, imaginative, even fantastic qualities" (pp. 243-244). This passion for life is identified by Theron with the Catholic religion -- a religion he had always thought more pagan than Christian. The Protestant fear of this race and religion is made apparent when we are told "Theron had scarcely ever spoken to a person of this curiously alien race before." To Theron the Irish had always been a "sinister and repellent name" characterizing a people "under the influence of a false and idolatrous religion" (p. 49). It is in opposition to this background of passion and emotion that Theron's church has established its place in Octavius. The Anglo-Saxon Protestantism, as presented in the novel, expresses a basic fear of the freedom of human emotions. The restrictive nature of Theron's church in Octavius is implied the first time Theron meets with the church elders to discuss the religious policy of the congregation. They force

³⁴Fiedler, p. 287.

Alice Ware to remove the artificial flowers from her bonnet and discourage the use of an organ or choir for the church service. The Protestant congregation has isolated themselves from the Irish-Catholic community by the establishment of a morality which forms a defensive social barrier. (It is the same barrier which initially protects Theron as an innocent from the world of new experience.) Theron's church members consider the Catholics idolators and the Irish workers trouble makers because they strike for better wages and working conditions. Brother Pierce, a church elder, expresses the full sentiment of the church when he calls for sermons damning the expression of free emotions and intellectualism.

Why, they say some folks are goin' round now preachin' that our grandfathers were all monkeys. That comes from departen' from the ways of our forefathers, an' puttin' in organs an' choirs, an' deckin' our women folks out with gewgaws, an' apin' the fashions of the worldly. ...You'll find we're a different sort here (p. 29).

And:

"Another thing: we don't want no booklearnin' or dictionary words in our pulpit," he went on coldly. "Some folks may stomach 'em; we won't."
(p. 28)

Because Celia is identified with Irish Catholicism, she becomes the image of everything Theron's Protestantism has tried to suppress. As Fiedler states, the dark lady embodies those qualities of "otherness against which an Anglo-Saxon world attempts to define itself and a Protestant one

to justify its existence." Celia is not only Irish Catholic, but she allies herself with ancient Greek culture, for it expresses values of intellectual and emotional freedom. Although she goes so far as to tell Theron that she is pagan, her religious attitude falls into the category of what Fiedler calls "moral improvisation."³⁵ Celia's elaboration upon the idea of being Greek defines the relaxed moral structure under which she functions. She believes in:

Absolute freedom from moral bugbears...The recognition that beauty is the only thing in life that is worth while. The courage to kick out of one's life everything that isn't worth while...(p. 205).

Celia Madden strives to be free from confining social ethics. Her system of morality is much the same as Sister Soulsby's in that it is developed and practiced consistently with regard to her own experience which has helped establish a valid identity in her world. Her beliefs and personal conduct are specifically alien to Theron's Protestant upbringing because they do not adhere to the "black or white" or "right or wrong" morality to which Theron is accustomed. Celia's actions appear immoral to Theron for the same reason Sister Soulsby's actions appeared immoral.

Because Theron lacks experience with Celia's world,

³⁵Ibid., p. 291.

her beliefs concerning individual emotional freedom take on seductive overtones for him. Once Theron has broken through his protective Protestant morality, the forbidden qualities of sexual passion which Celia embodies not only become attractive to Theron, but appear to be within his power to obtain. Celia becomes increasingly more attractive to Theron as he progresses out of his innocence and attempts to establish a new identity comparable with Celia Madden's. Because Theron identifies the completion of his quest with Celia Madden, he tries to adopt her intellectual questioning of traditionally accepted Christian doctrine and her emotional sexuality which is not accepted by his society. Although Celia Madden becomes the object of these desires, Theron is never able to reach Celia's level of emotional or intellectual freedom because his Protestant morality restricts him. Theron lacks the experience and intelligence to overcome his Protestant ethic, and as a result he becomes a victim of his own morality. When Theron seeks to fulfill his desires for emotional passion, Celia Madden becomes a symbol which replaces his innocent Christian faith. Theron uses Celia in a subconscious attempt to successfully alter or forget his old morality and fulfill a new identity -- that of a romantic lover. He feels the achievement of this identity is worthy of the superior talents both Sister Soulsby and Celia Madden have attributed to him. Ironically, the only reason they consider

Theron superior at all is that he is able to find an identity within his innocence. As an innocent, Theron is like Sister Soulsby or Celia Madden in that he is consistent with a morality developed from his own experience. When Theron progresses out of his innocence he loses his honesty -- his ability to believe in the morality of his actions. Thus, he loses the identity which had separated him from the hypocritical society of Octavius. Before, he had been superior to this society because of his honesty and his innocence. It is ironic that when he loses his innocence he loses the superiority which had before manifested itself as humility and is initiated into the hypocritical society.

Because Theron is obsessed with intellectualism and a new emotional or sexual freedom, he views every experience in terms of his new identity. Theron's impressions of Celia are described in both demonic and religious images which become the outward indications of Theron's subconscious conflict with morality. When Theron attributes demonic and religious characteristics to Celia Madden, he is trying to find some justification for feeling an emotional passion toward Celia which he knows to be immoral. These characteristics are most effectively combined in the seduction scene which takes place in her apartment. The demonic images, such as Celia's "rich, flowing waves of reddish hair," which glows "like flame," indicate Theron's basic inability to consider Celia anything but a destructive force

to the faithful Christian (p. 78). Her "red hair," a color traditionally used to describe physical passion, glows "like flame," which suggests the hell-fire awaiting the Christian who succumbs to the temptations of emotional pleasure. At another point Celia's hair is described as "coiled" in heavy strands at the back of her head, suggestive of the serpent -- a traditional symbol of the betrayer of innocence (p. 196).

When Theron defines his attraction for Celia in terms of religious imagery, he subconsciously attempts to make her pagan beliefs his new religion. Consciously, Theron rationalizes that he is above the condemning Christian morality. He feels an immunity from his old moral standard and a superior intellect allow him to pursue a role as Celia's romantic lover. However, because Theron can only interpret his experience in relationship to a guiding providence in his life, he subconsciously attempts to justify his passion for Celia in terms of the religious understanding of his world. This new understanding is expressed in terms of both Christian and pagan imagery as Celia becomes a kind of pagan goddess in Theron's effort to develop a new religious relationship to his experience. For this reason the interior of Celia's apartment impresses Theron as a temple characterizing Celia as the pagan temptress. Seven candles illuminate portraits of the "Virgin Mary and the Child" and, representing the

pagan myths, "unashamed" statutes of nudes (pp. 195&199). The soft, sensual tones of "pale amber and straw and primrose hues" color "flat upright wooden columns" which divide the walls into paneled sections (p. 195). Celia's piano, the instrument on which she expresses her "wild and tropical tangle of moods, emotions and passions," is set back into the fourth wall of the apartment (p. 105). The piano first appears as an altar to Theron, giving the entire room the qualities of a sanctuary:

There were pyramidal rows of tall candles here on either side, each masked with a little silken hood; below in the centre, a shelf-like projection supported what seemed a massive, carved casket, and in the beautiful intricacies of this, and the receding canopy of delicate ornamentation which depended above it, the dominant color was white, deepening away in its shadows, by tenderly minute gradations, to the tints which ruled the rest of the room (p. 195).

The sensual qualities of Celia Madden's apartment portend Theron Ware's seduction. His original impressions of Celia Madden as a destructive force in his life are correct impressions. In his innocence, Theron has a fear of those qualities which he is unable to understand. When Celia attempts to help Theron with his development, she gives him a false sense of self-confidence which causes Theron to believe he is capable of understanding Celia's values and applying them to his own experience. He deceives himself into believing that he can acquire an identity which will excuse him from the moral condemnation of his Protestant innocence.

Alice Ware is representative of the values Theron is capable of maintaining with personal integrity. Recognizing the desirable qualities of Theron's innocence, she states that Theron is at his best when he just a "good, earnest, simple young servant of the Lord" (p. 209). Her continual devotion to Theron, even after he rejects her, characterizes her as the fair maiden of the novel. However, Alice Ware's role in the novel is an ironic failure. Theron never fully returns to her, because he never comes to understand that in Alice lies the key to his lost identity. Theron's dreams of political success in Seattle, Washington, at the novel's conclusion indicate that he is still in quest of an identity he can never achieve. As John Raleigh indicates, Theron "will in all likelihood make an ass out of himself all over again and mistreat Alice again."³⁶ Alice will never be able to help Theron discover his own self-deception. Theron's quest for an identity will continually result in tragedy because he cannot appreciate his own limitations and accept himself as an average sort of person with no exceptional intellectual abilities.

³⁶Raleigh, p. x.

CHAPTER V

THE FAILURE OF THE QUEST

Harold Frederic attempts to present The Damnation of Theron Ware from an objective point of view: never once is he, as an author, drawn into the emotion of the story. The novel gains its realistic qualities when the romance archetypal form is contrasted with Frederic's objective description of the hero's failure to understand and rectify the causes of his problems. Frederic purposefully contrasts the idea of the successful completion of the romance quest with Theron Ware's downfall to emphasize the weakness in Theron's nature. This is not to say that Frederic is denying the plausibility of the romance pattern. The fact that the romance theme can be a realistic pattern in life is essential to Harold Frederic's portrayal of the weakness in Theron's nature, for only when the possible success of the romance quest becomes real do the inadequacies of the protagonist to complete the quest become the most important aspects of the novel. The Soulsbys characterize the successful completion of the romance quest because they have been able to understand and adjust to the conditions of their experience. Theron Ware's average or inadequate intelligence,

which deters his success as a romance hero, makes the romance pattern invalid for the protagonist of this novel. Because Theron follows this pattern which is accepted by his society and yet is invalid for him, he becomes an ironically tragic figure. Using the romance as a false motif for his novel, Frederic's objective style is effective in showing the irony of Theron's unsuccessful attempts to adjust to his world.

If Theron Ware is to adjust to reality as Harold Frederic objectively portrays it, he must develop a morality based on an understanding of his own background. He cannot adopt the morality of another character. For Theron Ware, the values of his innocence (humility and a dedication to the Christian principles of the church), obviously give him the most genuine identity in his society. Theron must develop values consistent with the experience of his early Protestant background, with one important change -- he must accept that there will be differing philosophies which work equally as well for other individuals. However, because Theron is intellectually incapable of liberalizing his views, when he abandons his identity as an innocent, he goes in search of a single superior set of values which will ensure him total social and intellectual success. This is in keeping with the romance pattern where the hero establishes one standard of morality which is more effective than any other for solving his problems of identity.

The irony of Frederic's novel is developed when he objectively shows that one superior set of values does not exist for the Octavius society. Northrop Frye describes the ironic fiction writer as one who "deprecates himself, and, like Socrates, pretends to know nothing, even that he is being ironic. Complete objectivity and suppression of all moral judgments are essential to his method."³⁷ By contrasting the objective description of events in the novel with the romance pattern Theron Ware believes to exist, Harold Frederic creates a third point of view. This final view, a combination of the objective and the partially omniscient, produces the third view which is reality. The final impression of the novel is one of irony, when an objective view of experience is contrasted with Theron's romantic impressions, and tragedy, when Theron is unable to understand the reason for this failure.

Irony becomes apparent when Theron's judgment of the archetypal figures in the novel is based on false impressions.³⁸ Theron believes that Sister Soulsby offers

³⁷Frye, p. 40.

³⁸It is interesting to note that Frederic spent a great deal of time educating himself so that he could give a realistic portrayal of the characters in his novel. In an interview with the Literary Digest he made the following comment about The Damnation of Theron Ware: "I am now writing a novel...the people of which I have been carrying about with me, night and day, for fully five years. After I had got them grouped together in my mind, I set myself to the task of knowing everything they knew. As four of them happened

him both sympathy and advice in an attempt to help him adjust to his confusing problems in Octavius. In this regard she does fulfill the role of the mythical mother figure. However, by juxtaposing Frederic's objective descriptions with Theron's impressions the reader discovers that Sister Soulsby's persuasive personality and wise counsel are ironically detrimental to Theron's successful enlightenment. Theron is initially impressed by what he considers the "youthful" and "decidedly wise eyes" of Sister Soulsby (p. 140). To Theron, her eyes are both "informing and inspiring," filled with "facile mirth and ready tenderness." (pp. 166,187). Theron feels that they inspire him with courage and confidence which parallels the type of inspiration Pallas Athene's "flashing eyes" provide Odysseus. The ultimate effect of Sister Soulsby's inspiring eyes is described by Frederic as "the image of two eagles in a concerted pounce upon a lamb" (p. 146). The use of this animal imagery illustrates that Sister Soulsby's good intentions are too

to be specialists in different professions, the task has been tremendous. For instance, one of them is a biologist [Dr. Ledsmar], who, among many other things, is experimenting on Lubbock's-Darwin's lines. Although these pursuits are merely mentioned, I have got up masses of stuff on bees and the cross-fertilization of plants. [For Theron Ware] I had to teach myself all the details of the Methodist minister's work, obligations, and daily routine, and all the machinery of his church. Another character is a priest [Father Forbes], who is a good deal more pagan than a simple minded Christian. He loves luxury and learning. I have studied the arts he loves as well as his theology; I have waded in Assyriology

worldly for Theron's understanding and she only serves to confound and confuse him and lead him into further pain and conflict. Animal imagery used in other descriptions ironically portends the tragic effect of the influence of other archetypal characters. This becomes apparent when Celia draws Theron to her "against his will -- like fascinated bird and python --" (p. 94). Father Forbes and Dr. Ledsmar "loll about" after they eat "like gorged snakes" (p. 100). Northrop states that the demonic animal world "is portrayed in terms of monsters or beasts of prey."³⁹ The Soulsbys ironically fill the role as beasts of prey when Theron becomes a "goose" or a "mouse", innocent and relatively helpless animals when compared to the Soulsbys' who are "eagles," "crows," and "bad old roosters" (pp. 173, 146, 181, 179). In an attempt to give him "the wisdom of the serpent," Sister Soulsby unconsciously transforms Theron into a serpent -- "a long, slim, yellowish-green lizard," Dr. Ledsmar tells us, "with a coiling, sinuous tail and pointed, evil head" (p. 230). This description dramatically alludes to the ironic and tragic results of Sister Soulsby's

and Schopenhauer; poured over palimpsests and pottery, and, in order to write understandingly about a musician [Celia Madden], who figures in the story, I have bored a professional friend to death getting technical musical stuff from him." "How The Popular Harold Frederic Works," The Literary Digest, XIII, 13 (December, 1878), p. 83.

³⁹Frye, p. 149.

counsel. Theron loses his innocence, and assumes a much lower identity in the opinion of those he would please the most.

Theron is charmed by Sister Soulsby's conversation, but from the beginning of their relationship he misconstrues her meaning. Frederic tells us that all her talk is a "brisk, direct, idiomatic manner of speech with an intonation hinting at no section [of the country] in particular." However, Theron discerns "a mellow cadence, with a soft, drawling accent," which seems to support Theron's child-like belief that Sister Soulsby's background is a "land of romance, of cavaliers and gallants and black eyes flashing behind mantillas and outspread fans" (p. 151). Sister Soulsby's attempts to be straight-forward about her background and experience are translated by Theron into romantic terms. Her attempts to be honest only lead Theron further from a realistic picture of himself and his society. During their first discussion Sister Soulsby tells Theron that Octavius oppresses his personal freedom, but what he really lacks is "common sense" (p. 145). Frederic informs the reader that after this discussion "what remained uppermost in his [Theron's] mind was not [Sister Soulsby's] pledge of championship in his material difficulties" (p. 146). Instead, he dwells upon the fact that she considers him an "intellectual man" who is "yoked up" with a "kind and honest" but not intellectual wife (p. 146). It is at this point Theron's self-conceit

begins to substantially express itself for the first time. Theron questions: "How was it...that Alice, who had once seemed so bright and keen-witted,...should have grown so dull?" (p. 147). Alice, whom Theron once considered "the bright-eyed, frank-faced, serenely self-reliant girl," now becomes an obstacle to his intellectual progress and happiness (p. 17). Sister Soulsby's words of encouragement have only created a false pride in Theron as he feels he must "sacrifice everything" for Alice:

His ambitions, his passionate desire to do real good in the world on a large scale, his mental freedom, yes, even his chance of having truly elevating intellectual friendships. For it was plain enough that the men whose friendships would be of genuine and stimulating profit to him would not like her [Alice] (p. 149).

Theron Ware misunderstands Sister Soulsby when he feels she willfully applies what she considers immoral methods to her work. Accepting immoral methods as necessary to his own personal success causes Theron to consider experience in terms of his own immoral relationship to life. The irony of Theron's mistake becomes apparent when he suspects Levi Gorringer, a church elder, of trying to seduce his wife. Initially Gorringer's gifts of potted plants to Alice and his sincere interest in the Ware's unpleasant situation in Octavius cause Theron to consider him one of his first true friends. However, when Theron's own motives become unjustifiable to his own morality, he cannot help suspecting his whole society of being immoral. By accusing Levi Gorringer,

or any member of his society, of dishonorable intentions, Theron is indirectly denying the possibility of honest motives for himself. Ironically, all of Theron's acquaintances are consistent with their own sense of morality. It is Theron's inability to appreciate the existence of more than one valid morality which contributes to his view of an unethical society following his loss of innocence. This problem first reaches a crisis for Theron when Gorringe kneels beside Alice at the revival service. Frederic's objective narration lends this scene additional irony as the two are described touching shoulders "as they [bend] forward beneath Sister Soulsby's outstretched hands, held over them as in a blessing" (p. 159). Sister Soulsby unintentionally initiates and sanctifies Theron's false impressions concerning the immorality of his world.

Theron Ware misconstrues the advice of Sister Soulsby because he is only of average intelligence and unable to adjust to her flexible judgment of his society's world values. As Sister Soulsby tells Alice at the conclusion of the novel, Theron is nothing more than "just an average kind of man" (p. 346). The initial confidence and praise of Ledsmar, Forbes, Madden and Soulsby, only create in Theron a destructive pride and false feeling of bettering his social position. Northrop Frye would define this character type as "someone recognizably like ourselves [who] is broken by a conflict between the inner and outer world, between imaginative reality

and the sort of reality which is established by social consensus." This character type is called the "alazon," the imposter, or someone who pretends or tries to be something more than he is. Frye goes on to say that this character may be concerned "with a mania or obsession about rising in the world."⁴⁰ When Theron becomes plagued with "an obsession about rising in the world" in the second part of the novel, he becomes the alazon figure. Theron misconstrues the advice of Sister Soulsby and the early friendship of Father Forbes, Celia Madden, and Dr. Ledsmar to enter a realm of "imaginative reality." He tries to adopt an identity he is not capable of properly understanding.

When Theron becomes an alazon figure, he assumes he has a more intelligent view of his world than he did as an innocent. He, therefore, rejects Alice Ware who is a symbol of his discarded innocence. Although Alice has the attributes of the fair maiden, she is unable to help Theron see the decline of his character. He feels her critical opinions only illustrate her lack of understanding of his "new skin," his new intellectual development which places him above his old confining morality (p. 207). The female character whom Theron feels is worthy of his attention is Celia Madden. Ironically, Celia appeals to Theron because he feels she represents the new intellectual and immoral role

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 39.

he has identified with her. Actually, Celia is consistent in her own moral standard and is initially attracted to Theron for his consistent morality as an innocent. We can believe that Celia has a sincere interest in Theron when she tells him he is "full of poetry, of ideals, of generous, unselfish impulses" (p. 99). However, we can also believe that her "roguish smile" in the seduction scene in her apartment marks her as the temptress of the romance tradition (p. 326). Celia Madden is an enigma in this novel, for she possesses more intelligence than Theron and certainly should be aware of the consequences of her actions. The fact that she derives an immature delight from shocking the Protestant ethics of Theron's innocence with her liberal views and actions is borne out in one of Frederic's later novels, The Market Place.⁴¹ In defense of Celia's honesty or sincerity in this novel, it must be noted that it is only through

⁴¹While counseling Lady Cressage about her love affair with the "rudimentary" protagonist of the novel, Joel Thorp, Celia Madden makes a statement she may be applying to her earlier experience with Theron Ware: "I'm afraid they are spoiling him -- just as the missionaries spoiled the novel savage. They ought to go away and leave him alone. As a barbarian he was rather effective -- but they will white wash him and guile him and make a tame monstrosity of him." While lecturing to Thorp about his irresponsibility, Celia confesses the lesson she learned from her immature actions toward Theron Ware in Octavius: "I talk with a good deal of confidence," she went on, with a cheerless, ruminative little laugh. "Because it is my own organization that I am describing, too. The difference is that I was allowed to exploit my capacity for mischief very early. I had my own way in my teens -- my own money, my own power -- of course only of a certain sort

Theron's innocence that she becomes a "destructive passion." As Fiedler points out: "...only when innocence and Americanism come to mean a single thing, do the Catholic, the Jew, the devirginated woman fuse into an archetypal image of terror."⁴² Because Theron is incapable of understanding the type of experience upon which Celia's values are based, she represents a threat to his innocence. When he deceives himself into believing that he does understand, he ironically sacrifices his own integrity -- the only characteristic which makes Theron appealing to Celia at all. Theron continues to deceive himself with illusions about his own intellectual progress, and his affair with Celia, until Celia bluntly informs him of his mistake. Theron's honesty is based upon innocence, an innocence Celia says he should have had the good sense to retain (p. 326).

Because he acts consistently with the moral values he has developed from his understanding of experience, Theron Ware functions most effectively as an innocent in his society. He enters the quest of the romance hero only to become a victim of his own limited understanding of reality. The archetypal

and in a very small place. But I know what I did with that power. I spread trouble and misery about me -- always of course on a small scale. Then a group of things happened in a kind of a climax -- a very painful climax -- and it shook the nonsense out of me. My brother and my father died -- some other sobering things happened...and luckily I was still young enough to stop short, and take stock of myself, and say that there were certain paths I would never set foot on again -- and stick to it." Harold Frederic, The Market Place (New York, 1898), pp. 182&269-270.

⁴²Fiedler, p. 287.

forces of good, which are supposed to help Theron mature out of his innocence to discover a new identity in his society, are present in the novel; but Theron's limited understanding causes him to confuse the advice of the good archetypal figures (Sister Soulsby and Alice Ware) and as a result he attempts to identify with the archetypal forces of evil (Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden). The hero's misconceptions of his intellectual and social maturity are contrasted with the author's objective relation of events to present The Damnation of Theron Ware as an ironic novel. Theron's inability to comprehend the reason for his destruction indicates that he will never readjust to reality with the same degree of effectiveness as that which he experienced as an innocent. When Theron fails in an attempt to take his own life, his situation becomes tragic: he is destined to remember an ideal past, and try, but never succeed, to create a utopia of romance in every new situation.⁴³

⁴³Richard Vanderbeets states there is evidence in the unpublished papers of Harold Frederic, in the Library of Congress which indicates "that the restrainedly optimistic ending of the book may not have been in the original design," and that Frederic has intended to end the novel with Theron Ware's death. I believe that the continuation of Theron Ware's life means a continuation of his suffering. This seems far more typical of the objective and futile tragedy of real life. I do not agree with Vanderbeets when he states that the present ending of the novel places Frederic in the category of a "comic realist." Richard Vanderbeets, "The Ending of The Damnation of Theron Ware," American Literature, XXXVI, 3 (November, 1964), pp. 358-59.

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