Reading the Bloody "Face of Nature":

The Persecution of Religion in Hawthorne's *Marble Faun*

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In the central violent event of Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun* (1860), a man is hurled from a precipice. I have argued elsewhere that when the protagonists thus decisively act to exclude the shadowy character known as "the Model," they enact the foundational move of Enlightenment discourse and the ideal of Platonic dialogue upon which that discourse is based.[1] Michel Serres summarizes the Platonic-Enlightenment strategy of communicational purity and clarity:

> To hold a dialogue is to suppose a third man and to seek to exclude him; a successful communication is the exclusion of the third man. The most profound dialectical problem is not the problem of the Other, who is only a variety——or a variation——of the Same, it is the problem of the third man. We might call this third man the demon, the prosopopeia of noise (*Hermes*, 67).

Miriam and Donatello, the united protagonists, indeed demonize the Model in these terms. What I would now add to that equation is the value of the Model's vocational identity: he is a Capuchin. Within the communicational framework of my earlier analysis, the most telling details were detected in Hawthorne's emphasis on the Model's "noisy" and "hazy" profile. In hurling the Model from the edge of the precipice and thus silencing his interruptions, Donatello secures for himself and Miriam the conditions of clear discourse. This "Enlightenment" demand for communicational clarity, somewhat lost in the English term, is more clearly expressed by *Aufklarung* or *Eclaircissement*.

Considering the Model within a religious framework brings into focus the more obvious sense of Enlightenment, an exchange of light for darkness: the death of the Capuchin signifies the banishment of superstition.

But this is an Enlightenment project presented with a skeptical Hawthornean difference. *The Marble Faun* insists that this triumph of rationality, over both noise and superstition, is nothing less than a violent sacrifice. Hawthorne had devoted much careful study to Voltaire and his disciples. That hero of the Enlightenment had dedicated himself to denouncing the crimes committed in the name of superstition; Hawthorne, in tales like "Young Goodman Brown" (1835), had evinced considerable sympathy with such a mode of critique.[2] But in the course of his demystifying labors, Voltaire had proposed aggressive measures against believers in religion and magic: for example, that magicians ought to be put to death on the grounds that they were idiots. As Tobin Siebers remarks, "Although the Rationalists made popular the fact of persecution, they did not consider the possibility that they themselves might be persecutors" (*The Romantic Fantastic*, 123). Voltaire's witticisms may appear less humorous to some in the light of subsequent history. Citing Meyer Abrams' authoritative reading, Siebers repeats the familiar insight that "for the Romantics, the destruction [caused by] the Revolution was a direct outcome of the policies of Rationalism" (30). The word "revolution" and its cognates circulate uneasily in the text of *The Marble Faun*, with numerous possible historical referents. The sacrificial language of republican virtue Miriam and Donatello rely on to justify their exclusion of the unwanted third man (994, 998), may suggest the legacy of the Jacobin who held that "to construct the republic" it was necessary "to exterminate one-third of the population."[3]

Hawthorne is not merely blowing the whistle, persecuting the persecutors of superstition. If he levels accusations, he certainly does not do so here in the conventional manner of Romanticism. As Siebers (drawing upon Eric Gans) has observed,

> The Romantics originally assumed the voice of the victim in order to banish all persecutors, but their defense was itself victimizing...not unlike the process of exclusion used by Reason to expel faith and belief. Like the Rationalists, they cast out every dissident, calling their enemies victimizers and announcing their own suffering as proof (Siebers, 29).[4]

Irving Babbitt——a fierce foe of Romanticism, perhaps to the point of persecution once again——wrote in 1919 that his "chief objection" to Romanticism was that "it has encouraged the evasion of moral responsibility and the setting up of scapegoats."[5] Hawthorne's set-ups and revelations in *The Marble Faun* proceed rather differently.

The murder takes place at Rome's Tarpeian Rock, a signal example of a sacrificial archetype catalogued by Andrew J. McKenna: "The cliff symbolizes a classical locus of ritual execution; like Rome's Tarpeian rock, it offers violence at a distance" (*Violence and Difference*, 56). Prior to their decisive act, Miriam and Donatello had been reflecting upon the traditional Roman practice of executing traitors at this site. When Donatello seeks her opinion on the morality of such deeds, Miriam readily supplies the sacrificial logic: "Innocent persons were saved by the destruction of a guilty one, who deserved his doom" (994). Acting on this principle, Donatello flings the Capuchin over the edge of the precipice. As Donatello again questions her after the deed is done, Miriam assures him that they have acted rightly: "Surely it is no crime that we have committed. One wretched and worthless life has been sacrificed, to cement two other

lives forevermore” (998). Though Donatello raises the moral questions, he does so as a kind of dialogue foil, allowing the violent ideology to be spoken and mutually confirmed, first as authorization to act and then again as justification. My sense of Donatello as a consciously complicit agent draws upon the scholarship of Robert S. Levine and Arnold Goldman, whose studies establish Donatello not as the “innocent” he is so often taken for, but as an adept republican schemer acting in collusion with Miriam.[6]

The Tarpeian Rock is but the first stop in the Hawthornean tour of sacrificial Rome: “They trode through the streets of Rome, as if they, too, were among the majestic and guilty shadows, that, from ages long gone by, have haunted the blood-stained city” (999). As they pass the Forum, Miriam mentions “Caesar’s murderers.” Donatello asks, “Are they our brethren, now?”: “ ‘Yes; all of them,’ said Miriam; ‘and many another, whom the world little dreams of, has been made our brother or our sister, by what we have done within this hour!’ ” (999).[7] Their rationalization of the murder of the Capuchin may seem to anticipate the clear-eyed madness of Nietzsche, and his Dionysian advocacy of a return to sacrifice. Though Miriam significantly “shivered” while making the above admission, perhaps unmasking a weakness in her sacrificial resolve, she is not yet ready to articulate any remorse (999). Miriam and Donatello have knowingly joined the international society of persecutors.

But a funny thing happens as the scene shifts from the Forum to the Church of the Capuchins, where Miriam and Donatello have a previous engagement to meet their American friends (1001). Though the cliff provided violence at a distance, here the executioners must confront the spectacle of “The Dead Capuchin” (ch. XXI). Seeing the “clay-cold reality” of the corpse laid out in the church (1004), the little group of

witnesses has difficulty believing the villain of prior perception and the victim at hand are one and the same:

> In truth, it seemed too wild a thought, to connect, in reality, Miriam's persecutor of many past months, and the vagabond of the preceding night, with the dead Capuchin of to-day. It resembled one of those unaccountable changes and interminglings of identity, which so often occur among the personages of a dream. (1009)

The narrative lingers over this incredulity, and Miriam in particular has to look twice: "By no possible supposition, could Miriam explain the identity of the dead Capuchin, quietly and decorously laid out in the nave of this convent-church, with that of her murdered persecutor" (1010). She examines his visage and the scar on his brow, she touches his hand, and finally accepts that "It is he!" and no mere "vision" (1011).

In first presenting the corpse whose transformed aspect so perplexes the group, the narrator suggests that "possibly, he had died in the odour of sanctity." But the narrator does not really seem to believe this, adding, "or, at all events, Death, and his brown frock and cowl, made a sacred image of this reverend Father" (1007). The novel does not absolve the Capuchin of his (unspecified) villainy; it merely asserts that he is no less a victim for his guilt, and his murderers no less guilty of a crime. The inescapable fact of the corpse drives this point home. He may or may not have been guilty of some "superstitious" persecution of Miriam; "and yet, because her persecutor found himself safe and irrefutable in death, he frowned upon his victim, and threw back the blame on her!" (1011).[8]

At this juncture of guilty recognition, the novel strikes the strangest note of all:

> And now occurred a circumstance that would seem too fantastic to be told, if it had not actually happened, precisely as we set it down. As the three friends stood by the bier, they saw that a little stream of blood had begun to ooze from the dead monk's nostrils; it crept slowly towards the thicket of his beard, where, in the course of a moment or two, it hid itself (1009).

The American, Kenyon, immediately offers a scientific explanation: "How strange!...The monk died of apoplexy, I suppose, or by some sudden accident, and the blood has not yet congealed" (1009-1010). Kenyon does not yet know that Donatello and Miriam are responsible for the Capuchin's death. Even if he did know, his diagnosis of something like a "sudden accident" would still fit the evidence as a reasoned response to the uncanny sight. And Miriam may even accept Kenyon's medical conjecture as supplying the literal cause for the flowing blood. Nevertheless, she knows what Kenyon does not, and mentions the possibility of a different interpretation:

> "Do you consider that a sufficient explanation?...Does that satisfy you?"
>
> "And why not?" he inquired.
>
> "Of course, you know the old superstition about this phenomenon of blood flowing from a dead body," she rejoined. "How can we tell but that the murderer...may have just entered the church?" (1010).

Through this latter hypothesis, Hawthorne opens up the Church of the Capuchins for a more historically-dense consideration of the death of superstition.

The "old superstition" to which Miriam alludes has venerable and pertinent precedent in the American archive. Cotton Mather reports the following incident from the 1674 Plymouth trial of three Indians accused of murder:

> It was remarkable, that one Tobias, a counsellor of King Philip's, whom they suspected as the author of this murder, approaching the dead body, it would still *fall a bleeding afresh*, as if it had newly been slain; yea, that upon repetition of the experiment, it still happened so. (original emphasis)[9]

Within the Plymouth courtroom, the sign of the bleeding corpse serves to confirm prior suspicions and to encourage further accusatory testimony. The guilt thus proven, the accused Indians are summarily executed.[10] Not the least remarkable aspect of this passage is Mather's description of the proceedings as a repeated "experiment." This courtroom account gives a picture of a community that was never more juridically superstitious than when convinced of its own "scientific" rigor. (Of course, some will say the same of the even more insistently scientific practices of certain European Enlighteners). Mather takes preemptive action on this score. He instructs the "reader" to "count me not struck with a Livian superstition in reporting *prodigies*, for which I have such incontestible assurance" (560).

"*Livian* superstition" is precisely what Hawthorne does count Mather's narrative as being struck with. Mather addresses the reader anxiously, trying to distance Plymouth from Livy's Rome and its bloody legends of foundational sacrifice.[11] Hawthorne's re-translation of the Plymouth courtroom drama to a Roman setting refuses any such tidy separation. As one effect of the complex layering these histories, *The Marble Faun* asserts the essential non-difference of all "justified" killing. But the peculiar details merit a second look.

Mather's Plymouth judges look upon the wonder of the bleeding corpse and see the guilt of the accused killers through it. The materiality of the sign is incidental; the

fact of the victim's corpse is not the focus of their gaze at this moment. Condemnation and retribution is the order of the day. But the further the incident recedes into history, the more likely a subsequent reviewer might find the judges' own guilty prejudice *reflected* in their interpretation of the bleeding corpse. The blood droplets' index of refraction might thus appear to change over historical time. An Enlightenment perspective might offer the following formula for this scenario: the more secular the view, the more specular the clue. But a subsequent observer might notice that such an enlightened gaze would make the corpse transparent again by looking through it to judge the guilty, superstitious magistrates.

Hawthorne does not simply hold court in the Church of the Capuchins, condemning Miriam and Donatello of murder in the same way the Plymouth court judged Tobias and those accused as his accomplices. Nor, to form a different analogy with respect to the bleeding corpse, does he step back and condemn some superstitious council of Capuchins for their accusation of Miriam and Donatello. In fact, he arranges for no such clerical judges to hand down a verdict in the presence of the sign. The critical difference in *The Marble Faun* perspective is that Hawthorne allows his characters' to arrive at a first shocked and then gradually more penitent recognition of their own acts of persecution. Miriam calls the guilty indication of bleeding corpse an "old superstition," but truthfully treats it as if it were evidence (1009). The sign of the blood is thus specular, but for the benefit of the principal actors, rather than merely from some historically-privileged observational vantage. First in the blood, and subsequently in the manifold "face of Nature," she beholds "her crime reflected back upon her" (1010).

In a map of the Mather scene, the magistrates and court observers surround and unite in superstition against the accused. In *The Marble Faun*, the faithful gather around the dearly departed. The murderers enter, but no one accuses or suspects them. What they see in the corpse is only an index of their guilt *to them*. The "old superstition" has lost its accusatory value: in the presence of their victim, the killers stand at the periphery, indicted only by themselves in their private interpretation of an accidental "sign." In Hawthorne's fictional project, we find at work the operation of something like "history" in the technical definition Siebers attaches to his use of the term: "History is the possibility of identifying the interactions among violence, superstition, and literary (or representational) forms" (13).

Within the Hawthorne canon, a diagrammatic comparison might be made to *The Scarlet Letter*. In that novel's portrayal of Boston, the magistrates and community array themselves against Hester. As Frye and Girard have noted, Hester serves as the sacrificial pharmakos of the community, and Hawthorne's novel adopts a perspective sympathetic to Hester as victim. In its critique of religious persecution, the novel aligns itself with a discourse of Enlightenment. And, without contradiction, by speaking for the victim who bears the mark of evil, the novel adopts a Romantic stance.[12] *The Marble Faun* retains the ethical orientation of exposing persecution and insisting upon the revelatory status of the victim, but the religious terms are inverted. The shift from *The Scarlet Letter* to *The Marble Faun* is from a portrayal of religious persecution to a portrayal of religion persecuted.

But what, finally, is the status of Hawthorne's phenomenal world with regards to the revelation of persecution? What can Hawthorne tell us about "Nature, Human

Nature, and the Mimetic Theory"? Is the assertion of animated natural indices of guilt always merely a projection, as, for example, a convenient means for persecutors to confirm their accusations? (And in this context, is not the mimetic theory a suitably skeptical corrective to manipulative claims that nature speaks?) As noted just above, Miriam looks into the "face of Nature" and sees her own "crime reflected back." In this instance, the apparent testimony of "Nature" offers a reliable account of violence, but would seem to do so only from a subjective perspective. That is, a meditative encounter with Nature may afford an opportunity for one to reflect upon, to recognize, one's own role as persecutor. But to ask for more, to look to Nature for objective testimony of persecution (that is, beyond forensic investigation of inanimate physical traces), would seem to re-invite superstition.

Some of Hawthorne's earlier sketches manifest not only his longstanding concern with the history of persecution, but his hedged interest in Nature's witness to that history. In "A Bell's Biography" (1837), the narrator revisits the scene of a massacre of "Romish" priests at the hands of Puritan rangers: "If, as antique traditions tell us, no grass will grow where the blood of martyrs has been shed, there should be a barren spot, to this very day, on the site of that desecrated altar" (*Tales and Sketches*, 482). Here the narrative, written for a New England audience, brings to that audience's attention the history of ancestral wrong; as an afterthought, the narrative notes that certain supposed natural indices would furnish a useful commemoration of that history. The narrative, with the historical facts of martyrdom already in hand, can assert what Nature "should" say, if, in fact, it possessed such capacity for specific articulation. But such added testimony is hypothetical and incidental. It merely happens to be the case that a certain superstitious tradition would

corroborate historical truth, but the testimony of Nature is in no way allowed to drive the establishment of that truth.

In light of the focus of this conference, what might seem most absent from the foregoing analysis is any suggestion that Hawthorne ever shows a concern with Nature itself -- that is, with Nature as other than as a site of human representational schemes. In a more general consideration of the testimony that might be found in Nature, "Foot-Prints on the Sea-Shore" (1838), Hawthorne's narrator fancies that "nature's own hand has here recorded a mystery, which, could I read her language, would make mankind the wiser and the happier. How many a thing has troubled me with the same idea! Pass on, and leave it unexplained" (*Tales and Sketches*, 564). Though narrator refuses to projectively ventriloquize Nature, he confesses to being persistently "troubled" by a lack of wisdom and happiness that Nature might potentially supply; this sketch bespeaks Hawthorne's ongoing curiosity about reading "things."

Though Hawthorne remains ultimately skeptical about presuming to comprehend what it might be that things would say, he does hint, in *The Marble Faun*, that Nature may itself be a victim of human violence, and that the traces of that violence may be read in the human-altered face of Nature. Moreover, the direct legibility of human violence against things can supply an indirect link between the victimage of nature and the victimage of persons. That is, violence against persons does not directly cause corresponding manifestations in nature, and traces of violence against nature do not furnish proofs of particular, mimetically violent human crimes against humans. But Hawthorne does present traces of actual human violence against nature as analogies by which to understand the nature (or, as we may see, "anti-nature") of humans crimes

against sacrificed persons. I will conclude with a brief reading of a scene immediately following the central murder in *The Marble Faun* in order to suggest how Hawthorne constructs an analogy between the violence of human sacrifice and human hostility to the nature of things. Again, I find that the thought of Michel Serres usefully supplements Girardian theory in making such an analogy legible.[13]

Soon after the murder, Miriam and Donatello meet in a garden "of straight paths, with borders of box...shorn and trimmed to an evenness of a wall of stone"(1015). They meet, that is, in a hard-edged realm where organic nature has been subdued by a Platonic geometry. The geometrical shearing of the unruly nature of things here mirrors the violent exclusion that Miriam and Donatello have perpetrated against the noisy, hazy figure who has heretofore kept them apart. When Miriam and Donatello unite against the third man at the edge of the cliff, Hawthorne's presentation of the Platonic solution plays out as an audible distinction. We first hear the "noise" and then "silence"(995); the immediate effect of this exclusion is the possibility of unmediated dialogue, a union of Same and Other in an ideal connection (997-8):

> So intimate, in those first moments, was the union, that it seemed as if their new sympathy annihilated all other ties, and that they were released from the chain of humanity; a new sphere, a special law, had been created for them alone. The world could not come near them; they were safe!(998)

The language Hawthorne selects belongs to the ruthless logic of Platonism. The two have suppressed natural irregularity and entered into a perfect "sphere" of dialogue, the hard abstract realm of geometric form that abhors "the world."[14] They consummate their sacrificial union in a sharp-edged garden whose design implies the same hostile logic to

that has brought them together. The murder leads them to the garden; the murder and the garden both lead away from the unruliness of nature, human and otherwise; the communicational exclusion and the horticultural shearing may be traced to the same sacrificial impulse. Thus does Hawthorne show how to read human violence as "reflected" in the reconfigured face of Nature.

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[1] " 'Within the domain of Chaos' : Nathaniel Hawthorne, Lucretian Physics, and Martial Logic," *Studies in the Novel*, 31:2(Summer 1999), 178-201. The murder of the Model appears in the section on "Hawthorne and Lucretian Noise," 185-189. Rosalina de la Carrera finds the same structure of ternary exclusion described by Serres to be the controlling model in the encyclopedic writings of Diderot; *Success in Circuit Lies: Diderot's Communicational Practice* (Stanford UP, 1991).

[2] This is the Voltaire who included in his anti-religious *Henriade* the Lucretian description of the sacrifice of Iphigenia (*The Nature of Things*, John Mason Good trans., 33n), emphasizing Lucretius' conclusion that "such are the crimes that superstition prompts"(*De rerum natura*, I.110; Good, 31): "Iphigenia dies, and the untied ribbons of her headband dangle down"(Serres, *Hermes*, 108; cf.*Drn*,I.85). In "Young Goodman Brown"(1835), Hawthorne may echo this sacrificial scene with the memorable fluttering "pink ribbon" that follows the maidenly scream and precedes Young Goodman Brown's lament, "My Faith is gone!"(*Selected*, 141). Hawthorne progressively read his way through all ninety-two volumes of the complete works of Voltaire between 1829 and 1831 (Kesselring, 63).

[3] Commenting upon this chilling remark by Monsieur d'Antonelle, Roberto Calasso observes that even the "profligate use of wit was likewise condemned" by the sober violence of such sacrificial reason(*The Ruin of Kasch*, 167-8).

[4] Writing in 1984, Siebers' cites Siebers cites Eric Gans' 1982 essay on "The Victim as Subject: The Esthetico-Ethical System of Rousseau's *Réveries*," *Studies in Romanticism 21.1(3-31).* Gans' subsequent work is perhaps even more to the point. Gans' "Esthetic History," part two of his *Originary Thinking* (Stanford UP, 1993) provides a thorough tracking of the status of sacrifice as a category of literary periodization.

[5] Babbitt's (New Humanist) remarks appear in his *Rousseau and Romanticism*; quoted in Siebers, 124.

[6] Robert S. Levine (drawing upon Arnold Goldman) sees Donatello as a cosmopolitan operative. The Carnival scene, for example, stages "a ritual reenactment of the revolutionary energies that brought into being the Roman Republic of 1849—as an enactment that many of Hawthorne's antebellum Protestant-republican readers would have applauded"(29; Levine also mentions the possible echoes of 1776). Miriam and Donatello, dressed as Peasant and Contadina, act as "masterminds behind the 'assassination,'. . .appearing to be uninvolved"(29); in short, they are slick politicians disguised as rustic provincials. Cf. Robert S. Levine, "'Antebellum Rome' in *The Marble Faun*" *American Literary History*, Spring 1990, 19-38; Arnold Goldman, "The Plot of Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun*," *Journal of American Studies*, December 1984, 383-404. In addition to picking up on a number of more subtle clues, these readings proceed from a clear narratorial warrant: the novel's "postscript" implicates Miriam and Donatello in a "political intrigue" (1241).

[7] Unlike many a practitioner of Enlightenment or Romantic exclusion, they are intensely aware of their implication in the ancient order of sacrifice—but of course Hawthorne has staged for them an occasion to act decisively against a particular individual. That is, the distinction between "symbolic" and real expulsion has no doubt something to do with the depiction of their awareness; nevertheless the ethical tendency of the novel is to show where the bodies are buried in all such acts. The characters' repeated "demonization" of the Model within the symbolic order, a demonization upon which the narrative carefully demurs, is pursued to its logical, fatal conclusion. The narration carefully refrains from endorsing this inexorable process. For example, when Miriam flings water in the face of the Model, commanding him to "vanish, Demon"(975), the narrator reserves judgment about this characterization of the Model, and maintains a skeptical

distance from the superstition implied in Miriam's gesture: "The exorcism was quite ineffectual upon the pertinacious Demon, *or whatever* the apparition might be"(975; my emphasis).

[8]A number of critics have picked up on the novel's incest motifs ("La Cenci," etc.) to suggest the nature of the Model's persecution: that perhaps Miriam was an "accomplice" to the murder of her father, to defend herself against incest, and that the Model, possessing knowledge of this crime, holds her "in his power" by threatening to reveal her sad history (1212-1213). But insofar as the novel's "Postscript" associates Miriam's participation in a "political intrigue" with the Capuchin's "strange persecution," and highlights her political activities as the subject of the suspicions a "despotic government" of "priestly rulers" holds against her (1240-1), the incest plot may appertain to a religio-political register. The guilty Father against whom Miriam had struck may be none other than that Italian Papa, the Pope.

[9] *Magnalia Christi Americana*, (Hartford: Silas Andrus and Son, 1853) vol. ii, 560; original emphasis retained also in all subsequent quotations from Mather. The account of the Sassamon trial, and King Philip's War, appears in "Arma Virosqe Cano," the sixth chapter of the seventh and final book. The intrusion of the American archive upon the Italian scene is indexed peripherally by the narrator's mention of ears of "Indian corn" to be found in the Italian fields and market (1065, 1095). One might note that by presenting the dead Capuchin as both a victim of Enlightenment discourse and as a piece of evidence in a Plymouth courtroom, Hawthorne brings together the two archives he knew best (as a perusal of Kesselring's list will show).

[10] As recounted, the case for murder as the cause of death is quite strong, and the case against those accused of murder is fairly convincing. Nevertheless, Mather's account gives a strange emphasis, and the court seems to grant unusual weight, to the most "superstitious" evidence.

[11] I note in passing that Donatello's full title, the Count of Monte Beni, which also gives the novel its full subtitle, *The Romance of Monte Beni*, points again to Livy's text. One Paolo Beni is cited in Anthon's *Classical Dictionary* (a known Hawthorne source) as a noteworthy scholar and editor of Livy. Thus the character who sacrifices the Model is linked to Livy's chronicle of sacrificial violence. Michel Serres in *Rome: The Book of Foundations* (Stanford UP, 1991) provides a light-fingered archaeology of sacrifice in Livy's *Ab urbe condita*.

[12] Here the Puritans would seem to demand a further explanation of the periodization suggested earlier; to a certain extent, they would perceive themselves to be in sympathy with an enlightenment project to eradicate witchcraft—with the difference that they believe in the power of such things. Thus to the anti-religious Enlightenment, the Puritans are themselves to be counted among the witches to be persecuted.

[13] As above (see note 1), I here borrow briefly from my earlier study, "Within the domain of Chaos."

[14]Under the aegis of this theoretical view, sacrificial logic prevails: "the excluded third is the scapegoat — the latter is at the foundation of anthropology; the former at the foundation of our logic. They bear the same name" In a scene not long before the murder, Miriam had expressed her revulsion at the sacralization of violence voiced by Hilda, Hawthorne's representative "daughter of the Puritans" (896, 1144, 1153, 1186, 1241). To Hilda's opinion that Roman blood made the Forum "hallowed forever," Miriam protests, "Is there such a blessed potency in bloodshed!"(988) — a protest that sounds, for the moment, much like Hawthorne's own. Yet approaching the moment of crisis on the cliff, she yields to the martial logic of the Roman institution of execution, asserting to Donatello, "Innocent persons were saved by the destruction of the guilty one, who deserved his doom"(994). And she follows through in justifying their own sacrificial deed: "Surely it is no crime we have committed. One wretched and worthless life has been sacrificed, to cement two other lives forevermore"(998). Unity has exacted its violent price.