

The Simms-Hawthorne Relationship Reconsidered in Light of Romance

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William Gilmore Simms's dates (1806-1870) were almost identical with Nathaniel Hawthorne's (1804-1864), but you could imagine no two writers with greater differences and dissimilarities in all possible respects. From the earliest criticism, Simms's reputation suffered from the charge — made even by his admirers — that he was too careless a writer. Although he produced over eighty volumes and enjoyed popularity at the earliest stage of authorship, he is remembered today as a minor writer in the literary history of the United States, and most importantly, as one of the nationalists who devoted themselves to the cause of the antebellum South. Hawthorne, on the other hand, wrote a relatively small number of works. He was slow to be recognized by the reading public, yet he and his works are now inexhaustibly analyzed and interpreted.

Hawthorne's criticism of Simms's *Views and Reviews* was rather harsh though seemingly subdued. Yet we should not dismiss the fact that throughout his life Simms's reaction to Hawthorne remained favorable. In the pages that follow I will present and review all the critically favorable comments that Simms made on Hawthorne's work. I will then argue that they developed Scott's historical romance in different though uniquely American ways. My argument thus intends to call specific and corrective

attention to the importance of the relationship of these two writers in the light of romance.

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Once Hawthorne scholars turned their attention to Simms, because in 1916 it was argued by Victor Hugo Paltsits that Simms was the most likely candidate of a Southern admirer of Hawthorne who had visited Salem in 1838. As is generally known, Simms visited Boston with letters of introduction from William Cullen Bryant in August 1843, and saw George Bancroft, Richard H. Dana and others. His stay there was short because "there are few persons in town" as well as because he received a letter from his wife telling his son was seriously ill with the influenza.¹ Hawthorne was not in Boston at that time. C. E. Frazer Clark, Jr. eventually put a period to the argument, identifying the gentleman with Samuel Gilman, a New Englander transplanted to Charleston, and interest in the relationship between Simms and Hawthorne was hushed up, and has, heretofore, received scant critical attention.²

With all the differences of their creative processes and cultural backgrounds Simms and Hawthorne had the opportunity to get in touch with each other. They had mutual acquaintances through whom they could know each other, such as Bryant, Bancroft, Evert Duyckinck, Park Benjamin, and Joel T. Headley. Whether anonymously or pseudonymously, their works were sometimes published in the same periodicals. The February 1836 issue of the *American Monthly Magazine*, for example, published "Old Ticonderoga" with no attribution and "The Light of Peace" under the name Eros, one of the pen names that Simms used. The *Southern Rose*, issued by Caroline Gilman, one of the oldest acquaintances of Simms's,

published Simms's poems and reviews of his prose, while it favorably reviewed *Twice-Told Tales* and published "The Minister's Black Veil" and "David Swan." Benjamin, who as an editor of the *New England Magazine* received a good deal of writing from Hawthorne, praised *The Yemassee*, one of Simms's earliest hits, in the June 1835 issue. Benjamin greatly complimented Hawthorne in the *American Monthly Magazine*, trying to soften their awkward relationship which had come out of Benjamin's not paying Hawthorne for his tales. The review contained the first public mention of Hawthorne's name, and Simms, who later was to find Benjamin "a very capricious person" (*L*, I, 365), had at least the chance of knowing Hawthorne. We know this because Simms had all the issues of the *American Monthly Magazine* except the March to August 1835 issues. Lastly, the *Democratic Review* carried an abundance of Simms's poems and Hawthorne's tales that were written using their real names.³

It was not until Evert Duyckinck of the Young America group asked him to review Hawthorne, however, that Simms came to recognize the talent of Hawthorne. In June 1841, Duyckinck, who was one of the first critics to appreciate Hawthorne's genius, requested Simms to review the *Journal of an African Cruiser*. Hawthorne, in fact, simply edited the journal that his close friend, Horatio Bridge, had written, but Hawthorne wrote to Duyckinck that "My own share of it is so amalgamated with the substance of the work, that I cannot very well define what it is."⁴ Hawthorne encouraged Bridge to find "as much as possible to say about the African trade, its nature, the mode of carrying it on, the character of the persons carrying it on" and look at things "in a matter-of-fact way."⁵ Hawthorne discloses the lengths to which he went in another letter to Duyckinck as follows:

As he gave me pretty large license, I have re-modelled the style, where it seemed necessary, and have developed his ideas, where he failed to do it himself, and have put on occasional patches of sentimental broidery — at the same time avoiding to tamper with his facts, or to change the tenor of his observations upon them; so that the work has not become otherwise than authentic, in my hands.⁶

In his reply of June 25, 1845 Simms promised Duyckinck that he would read the *Journal* carefully, and twenty days later he wrote Duyckinck, "I have read [it] with pleasure":

Headley's book is very pleasant reading. That of the Cruiser quite readable, though scarcely calculated to make much sensation. . . . Headley's vol. is still new to the reading of the public in a former edition. Poe's Tales labor under the same disadvantage, and so with mine. — And the African Cruiser, though a sensible & not unpleasing book is yet not a hit. Could your publishers have held out sufficient inducements to our best authors for the production of some half dozen original books to begin with, it would have been attended with better results. . . . But our first step will be to disabuse the public mind of the influence of English & Yankee authorities. *Every thing depends on this*: The latter have done more than anything besides to play the devil with all that is manly & original in our nature. They have, curiously enough, fastened our faith to the very writers who, least of all others, possess a native character. (L, II, 89-90)

Tellingly, Simms describes Hawthorne as "scarcely calculated to make

much sensation," but it is surely worth noting here that in the latter half of the letter he criticizes Longfellow and Irving for being non-American. In view of his pursuit of originality it is important that Simms feels sympathy toward Hawthorne as well as Headley and Poe.

Hastily disregarding any comment by Simms, Perry Miller brought our attention only to an unfavorable part of Simms's review in *The Raven and the Whale*,⁷ but, as is shown in the above quotation, the *African Cruiser* is also rated as "readable" and "sensible." In the *Southern and Western Magazine and Review* Simms reviews that Hawthorne is "one of our most exquisite and original essayists," marked by "neatness of utterance, and simplicity of arrangement." Furthermore he adds that "Hawthorne, a delicate, essayical prose writer, has a fine fancy of his own, which sometimes imparts the scarings of the ambitious muse. He is naive and generous in his genius, quite unaffected, (as we think,) and capable, in another atmosphere, of more courageous things."⁸

Simms even went so far as to say on August 8, 1845, that the next time he published a collection of tales he would follow the examples of Poe and Hawthorne:

A volume of Imaginative Stories — purely such, &, in my poor conceit, singularly original & successful as such, — such, indeed, as have no resemblance in American Literature, unless in the writings of Poe, and partially of Hawthorne — are to be collated out of my materials. (*L*, II, 99)

Taking into consideration that the first volume of Wiley and Putnam's *Library of American Books* was the *Journal of an African Cruiser* and that *Moses from an Old Manse* was to be published in 1846 as the seventeenth and

eighteenth volumes, we can safely say that Simms refers here to *Twice-Told Tales* or the tales published in magazines up to 1845. It is not clear how many tales of Hawthorne's he had read and to what degree he was attracted by them, but the fact that he restricted his glowing appraisal of Hawthorne's tales certainly suggests that he read an abundance of his tales. From Simms's intention to publish *Carl Werner* as one of the imaginative stories which are as "singularly original & successful" as Hawthorne's, we can also safely conclude that Simms focused his interest upon Hawthornesque themes of sin and knowledge, since *Carl Werner* depicts a protagonist troubled by an unappeasable desire for knowledge and the subsequent sense of guilt. *Carl Werner*, one of Simms's few allegories of "strifes between the rival moral principles of good and evil,"⁹ suffered unfavorable comments, but he was so deeply attached to it that as late as 1868 he sought to publish it as a separate book.

Simms showed another deep interest in Hawthorne's historical tales. He noticed in 1851 Hawthorne's *True Stories from History and Biography*, which contained historical tales, such as "Grandfather's Chair," "Famous Old People," and "Liberty Tree." In the notice he points out that the historical sketches, dedicated to "the chronicles of New-England," show the "good taste, excellent sense and thoughtful morality of the writer."¹⁰

Simms poked fun at Puritans or Puritanism in *The Yemassee* and *Woodcraft*, and in his first review he found Hawthorne "not sensational." What, then, caused him to praise Hawthorne? Possibly he was under the influence of Duyckinck. The literary conflict between the Knickerbocker and the Tetractys or "Young America" tells us that the reviews and criticisms in those days were inclined to be emotionally laid against individual writers of opposing literary circles no matter what merits their works may have had. Duyckinck was one of the leading critics who belonged to the

Young America group. So we cannot be too careful in taking Simms's criticism of Hawthorne at face value. Simms, in fact, recognized Nathaniel Parker Willis's large merits as a man of talents but held him in contempt as a man. We have to remember, however, that Hawthorne was not a critic who became so directly involved in this literary conflict as to make a clear stand against one or the other. Both circles took pride in appointing themselves Hawthorne's champion. In addition, Hawthorne was not an outspoken advocate of abolitionism from whose attack Simms had to defend the South.

Simms contended that a review which seeks to point out nothing but objections does not convey the whole truth: "The merit of a Critic, like the merit of any other judge whether elected or self constituted, is to see that justice is done, — not to desire to pass judgment, but to award justice" (*L*, I, 157). This emphasis on just criticism led him to deplore that "it is the man, not the volume, that is most commonly under the knife" (*L*, I, 100). His critical attitude was such that he at one time even wrote that no Northern writers had a fine sense of humor and incurred the anger from the Young America group. At another time he advised Duyckinck that he should stop defending Cornelius Mathews, telling him that a notice too favorable for the deserts of Mathews would be unkind enough and end in provoking critics to hostility. It is not without substantial justification, then, to conclude that Simms instinctively found there is more in Hawthorne that offsets Puritanism than identifies him with it.

Simms has the following to say about *The House of the Seven Gables* :

Mr. Hawthorne is rapidly making himself a high reputation, as a writer of prose fiction. He is a tale writer, rather than a novelist, and exhibits some very peculiar endowments in this character. He

has a rare and delicate fancy, with an imagination capable, in particular, of that curious distribution of light and shade — “that little glooming light, most like a shade,” In these revelations, our author shows himself a minute philosopher. . . . As a writer of prose fancies, fresh and delicate, of simple truths of the heart, which are obscure, in other hands, only from the absence of those exquisite antennae which he employs, he exhibits a grace and felicity which show him to be a master. . . . His province is peculiarly this fine one of the heart, with its subtler conditions, its eccentric moods, the result of secret weaknesses or secret consciousness, which it dare not confess and dare not overcome — its aberrations of soul or temper — its morbid passions, which fester without action, and are thus quite as vicious as if they had become developed by the actual commission of crime. . . . As a story, the “House of the Seven Gables” will probably prove less attractive to the general reader than the “Scarlet Letter,” as exhibiting a less concentrative power; but it is a more truthful book, and, if less ambitious in plan and manner, is not less earnest of purpose, nor less efficient in the varieties of character.¹¹

Compared with the review by Duyckinck, this is rather impressionistic and does not give a minute analysis of the work, but to Simms Hawthorne is a master of “simple truths of the heart,” with “those exquisite antennae.” While Duyckinck accusingly points out a streak of Puritanism that darkens the whole work and endeavors to trace the redeeming sunshine in it, Simms makes no mention of Puritanical color, nor does he stress the existence of sunshine in the work.

To the best of my knowledge Simms never reviewed *The Scarlet Letter*.

It is noteworthy that Simms, who was editor of the *Southern Quarterly Review* in 1849-1854, neither wrote any literary notice of it nor let anybody contribute an essay on it, since the *Southern Literary Messenger*, another Southern journal to which he had contributed his work, carried in June 1851 Henry T. Tuckerman's long laudatory article on Hawthorne's works, *The Scarlet Letter* included. Tuckerman admired Hawthorne for attracting his readers to "the retrospective, the introspective, to what is thoughtful and profoundly conscious in our nature and whereby it communes with the mysteries of life and the occult intimations of nature,"¹² but he also wrote in the same essay that *The Scarlet Letter* was "an artistic exposition of Puritanism as modified by New England life," presenting the reader with "the consciousness of Puritan life, of New England character in its elemental state."¹³

Simms's silence might result from his hesitation in reviewing the work, but we can guess how highly he evaluated it in the *Gables* review. He considered the *Gables* to be "a more truthful book," partly because he perhaps had the same antipathy to the tragic outlook on life presented in *The Scarlet Letter* as Duyckinck, and decidedly because his greater interest in dramatic development of the story than in metaphysical meditation came into collision with its static depiction and structure. Yet the review reveals his conviction that *The Scarlet Letter* is more ambitious in plan and manner and exhibits a more concentrative power. This is slightly, yet significantly different from Tuckerman's observation that "'The House of the Seven Gables' is a more elaborate and harmonious realization of these characteristics."¹⁴

As is often the case with the contemporaneous reviews of *The Blithedale Romance*, Simms's also is not favorable. It praises the work as "successful, as a work of art, as any of the preceding volumes of our author," but the work has all their defects "inseparable from the writer's mind."¹⁵

He sees them "chiefly in the shaping and conception of the work, and in the inadequate employment of his characters." He comments that the events should be accommodated to the moral which a character represents, and that Zenobia's suicide is an action "equally shocking and unnecessary." The ambivalences that surround Coverdale's narrative and his treatment of Zenobia naturally and inevitably escape his attention here.

The reason why the character of Hollingsworth is "admirably drawn" is easy to understand; *Charlemont* and "The Morals of Slavery" tell us that Simms was one of the Southerners who looked on the feminist movement with some disfavor. Zenobia might make him feel as constrained and uneasy as Coverdale. To give a parallel example, *Woodcraft*, Simms's romance published in 1852, portrays Porgy, who is torn between two widows. Mrs. Eveleigh has sweet graces, and makes witty and wise conversation, while Mrs. Griffin is beautiful, humble and affectionate. The former startles his sense of authority, and the latter is intellectually too inferior. Porgy, who dreams about the arcadian felicity of matrimony, hesitates to propose to Mrs. Eveleigh, whose tall and portly form with a certain spice of independence is associated with "Zenobia at the moment of her greatest confidence, when she defied all the strength of Rome."¹⁶ Eventually she refuses the proposal that he ventures to make toward the end of the romance, saying that she does not want to trust herself to anybody again. A great difference between Coverdale and Porgy is that the former narrates as a masquerader a story the truth of which he doubts, driving himself into metaphysical sexual rumination, while the latter adheres to a more physical happiness. Hence Hawthorne's Zenobia, writes Simms, should be converted "by marriage — the best remedy for such a case — from the error of her ways," to be "a mother, with good prospects of a numerous progeny."

Hollingsworth thus stands for masculinity which dominates femininity,

but there is a more important side to the high compliment that Simms pays to the characterization of Hollingsworth. Simms's words, "so admirably drawn" betray a quiet irony. His premise that the adequate employment of characters depends on whether "their results" "cooperate with their natures," leads us to conclude that Simms finds Hollingsworth "admirably drawn" in the rise and fall of his life. Hollingsworth transforms himself into a monster via his own ideas. To Simms Hollingsworth typifies a New Englander who not only feels "himself so especially chosen as a law unto him" but fancies "an especial right in himself to be a law unto his neighbours also" (*L*, I, 227).

Hawthorne's whole career, as Waggoner puts it, "had prepared him to write *The Marble Faun*,"¹⁷ but Duyckinck commented on *The Marble Faun* that the prevalent tone of the book is "sombre and melancholy, and in some measure revolting, but it is redeemed by art."¹⁸ Simms, on the other hand, shows quite a different reaction. It is not too much to say that he appreciates it more positively than Duyckinck, who not only mutilated the genius of Melville but also misunderstood Hawthorne, or Tickner and Fields, who were inclined to advertise it as a guidebook for traveling in Italy. Simms says :

Mr. HAWTHORNE is by no means an ordinary writer; no battener upon ordinary literary commons. He is a man of genius; a man of fine original conceptions; of a taste at once delicate and masculine; of a nice blending of the sanguine and the spiritual; of exquisite sentiment; and a just recognition, along with it, of the sensuous and human. . . . We are thus plunged — not suddenly, but gently, and with a detail which is studiously elaborated, so as to reconcile us to the improbabilities of the legend — into a recognition of the mystical, and so lifted into the transcendental of romance; which is subse-

quently blended, artfully, with the merely human. . . . No pains are taken to explain anything. Accordingly, there are many things which the ordinary novel reader cannot tolerate. But this is his misfortune, if not his fault. We are not to try Mr. HAWTHORNE's work by the standards of the ordinary novel. It rises into the regions of pure romance, and approximates the poetical standards. . . . A score of allegorical suggestions arise in the mind in the perusal of such a work; . . . but this is the very secret of an able achievement of art, that it is suggestive and speculative, and provocative, and forces upon the mind that quality of conjecture, which, with long brooding, will concentrate into thought, and take form as a distinct reality.¹⁹

Simms gives several examples of Hawthorne's defects, but each is counterbalanced by compensatory merits which come out of pure romance. Hawthorne does not "deal with men in masses, or with them in progress; hardly with men in action," but his world is "suggestive and speculative, and provocative." Hawthorne is similar to William Godwin and Brockden Brown, but with "far more compass and variety than either." There are some incoherences, but "We are not to try Mr. HAWTHORNE's work by the standards of the ordinary novel."

It would carry my argument too far if I insisted that Simms sufficiently appreciates Hawthorne's genius, but Simms's critical response is the closest thing Hawthorne had to greatest encouragement to lean on. Simms protests that Hawthorne plunges the reader into the transcendental of romance "with a detail which is studiously elaborated." The following review that appeared in the November 8, 1862 issue of the *Southern Illustrated News* is totally different from Simms's :

. . . the most original and powerful writer of all the tribe of New England, whose striking but somewhat abnormal creations have fascinated many readers in two hemispheres — we mean, of course, Nathaniel Hawthorne — finds his occupation gone in the mad excitements of the war upon the “rebels.” In his strange, eloquent, morbid book, “the Marble Faun,” he tells us he was driven for a theme to the beautiful, dreamy, classic, decayed, legion-haunted land of Italy, because there was nothing tragic in American history, and we had no ruins here around which romance would, as by instinct, enwreath itself. . . . Mr. Hawthorne will find enough of the tragic in the Lincoln war to satisfy the gloomiest imagination and if he wants a finer “ruin” than the “glorious Union,” we know not when to bid him seek for it.²⁰

When Simms reviewed *The Marble Faun*, nearly ten years had already passed since he began to adjust himself to the satiric portrayal of southern manners and the use of southern backwoods humor.²¹ The Union was well under way to separation and destruction, and Simms was more politically involved in the cause of the antebellum South. An understanding of the fact that the favorable comment on *The Marble Faun* was made by Simms, an activist in Southern cause, is important to fully appreciate how dedicated he was to romance. Romance was to him the element that forces on the mind that quality of conjecture which will “take form as a distinct reality.”

(2)

Assuming that a national literature was essential to national indepen-

dence, Simms stated that the literature of a nation should be "of two kinds":
It is that which distinguishes and illustrates, especially, the fortunes, tempers and peculiar characteristics of the people with whom it originates; or, it is that which is produced by native writers, from the common stock of human knowledge, in a fair competition with the reflective minds of other nations. (*L*, I, 215)

With a special emphasis upon the former kind of literature, he claimed that "the literature of a nation is, in plain terms, the picture of its national character," which he unwaveringly identified with "the representation of its permanent and inflexible social and political condition" (*L*, I, 207).

Simms harshly accused the reading public of its humiliating insensitivity which disparaged "a literature, national in consequence of its originality and the use of original materials" (*L*, I, 217). He affirmed that the "modes of life, passions, pursuits, capacities and interests" of Blacks and Native Americans are "legitimately the objects of the analyst" (*L*, I, 256), representing the truth which is not "disguised, or blurred, or obliterated" (*L*, I, 257). Simms's emphasis on the importance of unities of plan and harmony of parts in *Views and Reviews* and *The Yemassee* did not altogether involve the precise representation of actuality but more realistically truthful rendition of human experience.

In "The Prophetic Pictures" Hawthorne also referred to the two extreme courses reserved for an American writer:

The painter, of whom they had been speaking, was not one of those native artists, who at a later period than this, borrowed their colors from the Indians, and manufactured their pencils of the furs of wild beasts. Perhaps, if he could have revoked his life and pre-arranged

his destiny, he might have chosen to belong to that school without a master, in the hope of being at least original, since there were no works of art to imitate, nor rules to follow. But he had been born and educated in Europe. People said, that he had studied the grandeur or beauty of conception, and every touch of the master-hand, in all the most famous pictures, in cabinets and galleries, and on the walls of churches, till there was nothing more for his powerful mind to learn. Art could add nothing to its lessons, but Nature might. He had therefore visited a world, whither none of his professional brethren had preceded him, to feast his eyes on visible images, that were noble and picturesque, yet had never been transferred to canvass.²²

“Born and educated in Europe” is this painter, to whom even natural scenery functions just as “a frame work for the delineations of the human form and face, instinct with thought, passion, or suffering” (*TTT*, 178). The viewpoints adopted by him as an alterego of Hawthorne put a greater emphasis on a meditative analysis of the general truth of the human heart than on a realistic rendition of America. This artistic attitude to the world insulates the painter from the mass of humankind, enhancing in him the masochistic self-criticism which questions fictional creation as “a presumptuous mockery of the Creator” (*TTT*, 169).

His is an original American world represented in the conventional way that Europeans have explored in their tradition. Nature and past are “graphic illustrations of the volume of his memory, which genius would transmute into its own substance, and imbue with immortality” (*TTT*, 178). The other alternative which he would have taken is to establish “that school without a master,” with “no works of art to imitate, nor rules to fol-

low." Hawthorne possibly bears in mind such writers as Cooper and Sedgwick as examples of this type of writing here.

Simms and Hawthorne, however, had their strong connecting link in the person of Sir Walter Scott, whom, interesting enough, Duyckinck underestimated and scorned. As early as 1835 Simms mentioned in a preface to *The Yemassee* that whereas Fielding and Richardson confined their felicitous narration to common and daily occurring events, Scott's romance grasped the possible, and that *The Yemassee* was an American epic which meets the standards of romance. The epic, we should understand here as Georg Lukács states in *The Historical Novel*, is similar to a romance in that "they both seek to create the impression of life as it normally is as a whole."²³

It is a matter of common knowledge that *Fanshawe*, Hawthorne's first romance, was written after a fashion of Scott's historical romances, and that Hawthorne refused to acknowledge his authorship even to his wife. Historical romance called his attention to the use of the past as an inexhaustible supply of material. George Dekker is correct in saying "it was as a 'Romantic' in the tradition of Scott that his [Hawthorne's] interest in the Puritan past of his native region was confirmed and deepened."²⁴

Whenever an occasion offered, however, Hawthorne persisted in proclaiming that the historical romance written in the grain of Scott's was old-fashioned. One of the most outstanding examples that reveal Hawthorne's ambivalence toward Scott is "P's Correspondence." Scott, Hawthorne says, achieves in his verse and prose "but one thing, although that one in infinite variety," adding that

Were he still a writer, and as brilliant a one as ever, he could no longer maintain anything like the same position in literature. The

world, now-a-days, requires a more earnest purpose, a deeper moral, and a closer and homelier truth, than he was qualified to supply it with.²⁵

But who would replace Scott? Hawthorne immediately refers to Charles Dickens, but just as quickly mentions that he is dead. In the *Salem Advertiser* Hawthorne criticizes Dickens for being a writer whose pen grasps “the richly grotesque surface of life,” employing “no intellect . . . and a quick pair of eyes, a sunny fancy, and a most genial heart.”²⁶

Hawthorne found the psychological penetration into general human nature “more earnest” than the accuracy of the portrayal and varieties of characterization. It is true that Scott’s model of historical romance supplied him with a region where actuality hesitates to obtrude itself on his fictional creation. Historical romance meant much to Hawthorne, a writer who calmly analyzed the human heart. In the early nineteenth century, however, historical romances were tinged with the whig philosophy of history and adapted to glorify American history. To Hawthorne Simms was a bad example of this type of romance writer :

Mr. Simms is a man of vigorous mind — a writer of well-trained ability — but not, as we feel most sensibly in his best passages, a man of genius. This is especially discernible in the series of lectures above alluded to; they abound in brilliant paragraphs, and appear to bring out, as by a skilfully applied varnish, all the lights and shades that lie upon the surface of our history; but yet, we cannot help feeling that the real treasures of his subject have escaped the author’s notice. The themes suggested by him, viewed as he views them, would produce nothing but historical novels, cast in the same worn-

out mould that has been in use these thirty years, and which it is time to break up and fling away.²⁷

There is no telling why Duyckinck asked Hawthorne to review *Views and Reviews*. Probably it was to show his gratitude to Simms, who had readily reviewed Hawthorne's works in the South. More likely it was because Duyckinck expected to draw some favorable criticism from Hawthorne, for he had asked Hawthorne to review not only the work of Simms but also of Dickens and Headley. Duyckinck did not understand Hawthorne enough to predict his antagonistic reaction to this collection of lectures and reviews that brought to light Emersonian literary declaration of independence from European culture, an appeal to exclusive nationalism, and a glorification of the progress of the frontier, while disregarding any counterbalancing defects.

In *Views and Reviews* Simms uses the term "neutral ground" to define the twilight of time, "that uncertainty of aspect and air in history, which so provokes curiosity, and so encourages doubt."²⁸ We hesitate, however, even to compare it with an intermediate space Hawthorne describes in "The Haunted Mind," where the passing moment lingers and becomes truly the present. Simms's neutral ground is totally different from the metaphorical formulation of the creative process known as a neutral territory in "The Custom-House." It is natural that Hawthorne should have disliked Simms, a self-appointed successor to Scott as a historical romancer, who voices "Poetry or romance, illustrative of those national events of which the great body of the people delight to boast, . . . possesses a sort of symbolical influence upon their minds."²⁹

Should we conclude, then, that Hawthorne just accidentally stood high in the estimation of Simms? Is any comparison with Hawthorne, as Trent comments on Simms's romance, "of course out of the question"?³⁰ The pre-

faces and introductory paragraphs of romances and short stories written by Simms, however, leave no room for such conclusion. There he is more sensitive to, sometimes even doubtful of, his own creation and less reluctant to pay attention to the dark side of historic events than *Views and Reviews* reveals him to be. The fact that Simms followed Scott rather than Hawthorne and Cooper and yet he praised the latter two needs a deeper and closer explanation than attributing it solely to his atavistic tendency or lack of spiritual insight.

Simms's *The Yemassee* has usually been classified as a frank imitation of Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*. One of the reasons that the former is estimated literarily inferior to the latter is that it lacks American myth. It is no exaggeration to say that critics complain that in *The Yemassee* Native Americans are represented just too literally and graphically, sometimes even to the point of grotesqueness, and that the clash between the two cultures is not elevated in its mythical dimensions. However, in *The Yemassee* Simms's endeavor to depict and understand Indians in terms of white mythology is undermined by the merciless and all-purpose westward movement, which reveals his keen realization of the fact that America only saw the conquest or extermination of Native American culture by white civilization. He protests with a mild irony that the idea of a confrontation between the two cultures is to be questioned. The truth in *The Yemassee*, achieved through the unities of plan, purpose, and harmony of parts, is that there is no possible way, substantiated by established facts, to unify the two plots that represent Native Americans and the whites.³¹

Simms's cultural background antagonistic to Puritanism and its mythical tendency toward abstraction encouraged him to go after the realistic rendering. True, but we must not let the fact pass that he pursued it consciously. He even accusingly pointed out Cooper's recurrent use of the

same patterns and simple representation of characters in *Views and Reviews*. Simms admired Scott for his detailed and variegated characterization in his fiction. He deliberately followed Scott, because he considered modifications that Cooper made on Scott's model to be unique, yet with counteractive defects.

In a review of Whittier's *The Supernaturalism of New England*, Hawthorne expressed sharp criticism of Whittier's inclination for emphasis of American elements like this: "The contrary is rather remarkably the fact; the forest-life of the first settlers, and their intercourse with the Indians, have really engrafted nothing upon the mythology which they brought with them from England."³² Neither did Hawthorne attach much importance to the forest-life or to contact with Native Americans, that is, the frontier experience in the formulation of the American character. Take "The Gray Champion" for example, in which he transformed the participation of a regicide judge in an Indian skirmish at Hadley into the Boston revolt against Andros. Like the painter of "The Prophetic Pictures," he was enriched by his adventurous ramble, but "the stern dignity of Indian chiefs; the dusky loveliness of Indian girls; the domestic life of wigwams; the stealthy march; the battle beneath gloomy pine-trees; the frontier fortress with its garrison" were "all the worn-out heart of the old earth . . . revealed to him under a new form" (*TTT*, 178). Hawthorne was more concerned with depicting the psychological aspect of history and metaphysics of the human heart than differences between whites and Native Americans or blacks, or between polite and vulgar society.³³ This is not to say he evaded or distorted the facts, nor is it my intention to insist that Simms reveals in his work more social and cultural truths than Hawthorne. My point is that the dearth of mythical inclination caused by his cultural surroundings led Simms to take an approach to Scott's legacy quite different from Hawthorne's and Co-

per's, and provided him with a map of social and historical reality that emerged from literal description of actual life and facts. He was as greatly influenced by Scott's historical romances as Hawthorne and Cooper but in different ways. Scott fascinated all these writers in that "in a society undergoing rapid transformation . . . conflict between the old and the new was inevitable but in historical actuality the warring sides could never be 'pure' parties of reaction and progress."³⁴ Hawthorne and Cooper developed this idea of polar opposites into a more simplified one, whether metaphysical or mythological. Although Cooper argued in the introduction of *The Pioneers* that his work was a descriptive tale, it was tinged, as Simms saw, with mythical inclinations. Simms, on the other hand, adhered to minute and realistic descriptions, another of Scott's characteristics. Simms believed that romance is distinguished from the domestic novel in material rather than in fabrication, and that the depiction of the possible produces a sociological truth only when it is supplemented by minute social details and particular facts. This realistic attitude helped him demythologize white mythology.

Attaching too much importance to actual facts caused extensive damage to Simms's dedication to truth. This is easily demonstrated by his acquiescence in the historical development of the South in which blacks were doomed to be treated as slaves and Indians driven away beyond the Mississippi River. We can see, however, a pronounced awkward evolution of plot betraying his honest pursuit of truth even in his works which seem to justify the means that victors or whites take. The seemingly easy conclusion of the story revealing his optimism excites in readers doubt and ambivalence. The life-like representation of history that Simms pursues discloses where the question lies, and the question remains unsettled, because it is rendered in the work too graphically to be cleared up by roman-

tic progressivism.

Simms highly estimated Shakespeare, Scott and Dickens because of their mental flexibility. He criticized Cornelius Mathews for not having "that pliancy of mood. . . which enables him to go out of himself, to forget himself, to forget his favourite thoughts and fancies, and to throw all the strength of his intellect into the dramatis personae that grow under his hands."³⁵ It would be misleading to suggest that Simms did not know Scott enough to draw from him positive merits which would go a long way toward creating his realistic romance. Rather than the idealized and simplified characterization, Simms chose more life-like representation.

Hawthorne was marked by meditative inclination and abstractive allegorization, while Simms, though he read Bunyan (whose *Pilgrim's Progress* Simms enjoyed reading as a youth), Spenser, and Milton as Hawthorne did, preferred dramatic action and sensational style. Romance, to Hawthorne, was a work of art which has "a fairy right to present [the truth of the human heart] under circumstances, to a great extent, of the writer's own choosing or creation,"³⁶ whereas Simms deemed it essential to subordinate romance to, to use Hawthorne's term again, "graphic illustrations" (*TTT*, 178). Simms's romance is not at all "characterized by a tangential relation to social experience."³⁷ He reviewed and complimented Cooper's works more often than Hawthorne's, since he found the former illustrated more graphically "the fortunes, tempers and peculiar characteristics of the people with whom it [a national literature] originates." A full realization of the fact, however, that Simms estimated Hawthorne highly despite their differences of choice of material and representation might open the way to a new interest in their relationship, which is involved with the two approaches to adapting the historical romance of Scott into original American fiction. Simms, who held the record of opinions and definitions of romance in the

South, supported Hawthorne's pure romance exactly because he appreciated the value and potentialities, and approved of the wide varieties, of romance differentiated from the ordinary novel of society.

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Notes

1 Mary C. Simms Oliphant, Alfred Taylor Odell, T. C. Duncan Eaves, eds. *The Letters of William Gilmore Simms* (Columbia, S. C.: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 5 vols., 1952-1956; vol. 6, 1982), vol. I, p. 364. Hereafter cited as *L*. Subsequent volume and page references to Simms's *Letters* will be given in the parentheses in the text. See also *The Letters of William Cullen Bryant* (New York: Fordham Univ. Press, 1977), vol. II, p. 244.

2 See C. E. Frazer Clark, Jr., "In Quest of A Southern Admirer of Nathaniel Hawthorne," *The Nathaniel Hawthorne Journal 1971* (Washington, D. C.: NCR Microcard Editions, 1971), pp. 208-226. For Hawthorne's link with the *Southern Rose*, which Mrs. Caroline Gilman edited, see Wayne Allen Jones, "New Light on Hawthorne and the *Southern Rose*," *The Nathaniel Hawthorne Journal 1974* (Washington, D. C.: Microcard Editions Books, 1975), pp. 31-46.

3 For relations between Hawthorne and Benjamin, see Bertha Faust, *Hawthorne's Contemporaneous Reputation* (1939; rpt. New York: Octagon, 1977), pp. 21-24, and Frank Luther Mott, *A History of American Magazines, 1741-1850* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard Univ. Press, 1957), pp. 599-603, 618-621. For Simms's use of the pen name Eros, see James E. Kibler, Jr., *Pseudonymous Publications of William Gilmore Simms* (Athens, Georgia: The Univ. of Georgia Press, 1976), p. 50. Several poems by Simms appeared in the *United States Magazines and Democratic Review* which carried a great many of tales by Hawthorne. The June 1844 issue, for example, carried Simms's poem "The Beautiful" and Hawthorne's tale "The Artist of the Beautiful," which is a historically interesting coincidence.

4 Thomas Woodson, L. Neal Smith, and Norman Holmes Pearson, eds. *The Letters, 1843-53*, the Centenary Edition of *The Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne*, vol. XVI (Columbus: Ohio State Univ. Press, 1985), p. 86.

5 *The Letters, 1843-53*, p. 26.

6 *The Letters, 1843-53*, p. 82.

7 Perry Miller, *The Raven and the Whale* (1955; rpt. Westport: Greenwood, 1973), p. 136.

8 *Southern and Western Magazine and Review*, Vol II (Nov., 1845), 130, 348. L, II, 105n. and Edd Winfield Parks, *William Gilmore Simms as Literary Critic* (Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1961), p. 34 attribute this review to Simms.

9 John C. Guilds, ed., *Stories and Tales*, vol. V of *The Writings of William Gilmore Simms* (Columbia: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 1969), p. 89. For the publication of *Carl Werner*, see *Stories and Tales*, pp. 655-657 and John C. Guilds, *Simms: A Literary Life* (Fayetteville: The Univ. of Arkansas Press, 1992), pp. 89-92.

10 *Southern Quarterly Review*, new ser. iii (April, 1851), 571-2, quoted in J. Donald Crowley, ed., *Hawthorne: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), p. 186. Although Parks does not mention this notice, L, III, 112n. identifies it as Simms's.

11 *Southern Quarterly Review*, Vol. IV, new ser. no. 7, (July, 1851), 265-266. This review is ascribed to Simms by Parks, p. 34 and L, III, 120n., and quoted in Crowley, pp. 202-203 as an unsigned review. For Duyckinck's review of *The House of the Seven Gables*, see E. A. Duyckinck, *Literary World*, viii (26 April, 1851), 334-5, quoted in Crowley, pp. 192-194.

12 Crowley, p. 213.

13 Crowley, p. 216.

14 Crowley, p. 216.

15 *Southern Quarterly Review*, vol. VI, new ser. no. 12 (Oct., 1852), 543. This review is ascribed to Simms by Parks, p. 34 and L, III, 185n., and quoted in Crowley, pp. 258-259 as a notice in the *Southern Quarterly Review*.

16 William Gilmore Simms, *Woodcraft* (Spartanburg, S. C.: The Reprint Company, Publishers, 1976), pp. 390-391. Porgy meditates on a woman: "To get a woman who shall best comprehend one is the sufficient secret; and no woman can properly comprehend her husband, who is not prepared to recognize his full superiority" (*Woodcraft*, p. 374). Simms comments: "His ideas of woman were those of a period when the sex had not yet determined to set up for itself; though wielding a most potent sway in society, and even in politics, particularly in Carolina. His models, accordingly, required absolute dependence in the woman, though *without meaning to abridge any of her claims as a woman, or to subjugate, unjustly, her individuality*" (*Woodcraft*, p. 399. Emphasis mine).

17 Hyatt H. Waggoner, *Hawthorne: A Critical Study* (Cambridge, Ma. : Harvard Univ. Press, 1955), p. 209. Although Hawthorne's evasive attitude toward the felix

culpa in *The Marble Faun* sometimes forces an unfavorable comment, no one could deny that it unfolds the Hawthornesque theme of sin, isolation, and community.

18 Duyckinck, *Cyclopedia of American Literature* (Philadelphia: William Rutter, 1875), II, 363. Duyckinck says in the same passage that *The Marble Faun* rests on "a strange theory of transformation, physical and moral, weaving the influences of far-distant heathenism with the conditions of modern society in the eternal city," and it is "relieved by many passages of delicacy of sentiment, and by a series of local descriptions of the statuary, gardens, and palaces of Rome, of great beauty."

19 The Charleston *Mercury* (Charleston, S.C.: June 7, 1860), Vol. LIV, No. 10,876. This review is ascribed to Simms by Parks, p. 34, but Crowley makes no mention of it. The *Mercury* was controlled by Robert Barnell Rhett, a radical secessionist at that time in South Carolina, and Simms was advised by his friend James Henry Hammond not to edit it. Simms, however, contributed literary notices and articles. See *L*, IV, 42n.

20 *Southern Illustrated News* (Richmond, Virginia: Nov. 8, 1862), vol. I, No. 9. According to *L*, IV, 412n. and 421n., Simms published in this weekly six poems and "Paddy McGann," but it is unlikely that he contributed literary notices to it.

21 Mary Ann Wimsatt, *The Major Fiction of William Gilmore Simms* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1989), p. 7. For a full discussion of these two types of realism, see Wimsatt, pp. 156-210.

22 *Twice-Told Tales*, Centenary Edition, vol. IX, p. 168. Hereafter cited as *TTT*. Subsequent page references to this story will be given in parentheses in the text.

23 Georg Lukács, *The Historical Novel*, trans. Hannah and Stanley Mitchell (1962; rpt. Atlantic Highlands, N. J.: Humanities Press, 1978), p. 46. Lukács sees Sir Walter Scott as a conservative heir to the eighteenth-century realistic fiction where the representation of conflict of the old and the new in the style of epic results in ambivalence. In his essay "Epic and Novel," Mikhail M. Bakhtin states that the epic as a genre can be characterized by the national heroic past which "stands on an utterly different and inaccessible time-and-value plane." Epic discourse is "infinitely far removed from discourse of a contemporary about a contemporary addressed to contemporaries." The novel, writes Bakhtin, "by contrast, is determined by experience, knowledge and practice." Simms represented a national epic past in his fiction, indeed, but he did not separate it from contemporary reality in which he lived. He understood epic as he knew it was, to use Bakhtin's words again, "already being transformed into novel." In view of this it is no wonder that he turned to the realistic representation so soon. For an English translation of "Epic and Novel," see

Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1981), pp. 3-40.

24 George Dekker, *The American Historical Romance* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1987), p. 131.

25 *Mosses from an Old Manse*, Centenary Edition, vol. X, p. 369.

26 Randall Stewart, "Hawthorne's Contributions to the *Salem Advertiser*," *American Literature*, 5 (1933-34), 331.

27 "Hawthorne's Contributions to the *Salem Advertiser*," 331.

28 William Gilmore Simms, *Views and Reviews in American Literature, History and Fiction*, 1st ser. (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1962), p. 59.

29 *Views and Reviews*, 1st ser., p. 54.

30 William P. Trent, *William Gilmore Simms* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1892), p. 329.

31 For further details, see my papers, "Demythicalizing the American Myth: Ambivalence in *The Yemassee*," (in Japanese) *Studies in Foreign Languages and Literature*, vol. 29 (1993), 1-29, and "Simms's Concept of Romance," *Studies in Foreign Languages and Literature*, vol. 30 (1994), 67-89. For an illuminating discussion of the relationship between Scott, Cooper and Simms, see C. Hugh Holman, "The Influence of Scott and Cooper on Simms," *American Literature*, 23 (1951), 203-212. Vernon L. Parrington, who makes a comparison between *The Yemassee* and *The Last of the Mohicans*, says the former is "an elaborately carved and heavily freighted Spanish bark that is left far astern by the trim Yankee clipper ship," but it is to be noted that Simms's "elaborately carved and heavily freighted" representation reduces his romantic progressivism. See Parrington, *Main Currents in American Thought*, vol. 2 (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1927), p. 129.

32 Randall Stewart, "Two Uncollected Reviews by Hawthorne," *NEQ*, 9, (1936), 506.

33 Hawthorne went so far as to say a story of Indian warfare is "the meanest kind of contest in which blood has ever been shed," and "a struggle in which there is such a character of fate, that it almost precludes the ideas of wrong and pity" (*The Elixir of Life Manuscripts*, Centenary Edition, vol. XIII, 260). Native Americans, however, were a perpetual interest to him and a fruitful field in which to develop his fundamental themes. In "The Seven Vagabonds" he regards the adolescent vagrancy of a writer as identical with their savage virtue and uncultured force, which are untameable to the routine of artificial life. Beginning with "Mrs. Hutchinson," closely followed by "Endicott and the Red Cross," Hawthorne develops in his romances their

struggle with the whites into the antagonism within Puritan society between orthodoxy and heterodoxy, and moreover sublimates it into a confrontation between dark ladies and society. My point here is that Native Americans served Hawthorne rather metaphysically. See my paper, "Hawthorne and the Native American," (in Japanese) *The Bulletin of Aichi University of Education*, vol. 39 (1990), pp. 47-58.

34 Dekker, p. 50. Dekker asserts with Georg Lukács that stadialism in Scott's works reveals ambivalence which comes from a unified perspective on past, present, and future. Dekker contends, however, again with Lukács, that American successors, including even Cooper and Twain, tended to become sentimental or incoherent in their sympathies for primitive societies. In the case of George Bancroft, whose whig philosophy of history closely parallels Simms's, stadialism meant a fixation on the future. See Dekker, pp. 74, 83. Wimsatt also states that the development of American civilization could not have such a dialectic structure as Scott offered in his romances. See Wimsatt, pp. 36-39.

35 William Gilmore Simms, *Views and Reviews in American Literature, History and Fiction*, 2nd ser. (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1845), p. 165.

36 *The House of the Seven Gables*, Centenary Edition, vol. II, p. 1.

37 Robert Clark, "American Romance," in *Encyclopedia of Literature and Criticism*, eds. Martin Coyle et al. (London: Routledge, 1991), p. 577. Recent criticisms reveal that the romance hypothesis, explored by myth and symbol criticism, sought to disengage the United States from ideology, but Simms, a writer of mimetic representation, saw Hawthorne as a writer of pure romance. This does not necessarily mean that Hawthorne evaded representation of reality, but rather, Simms understood romance had two modes of representation.