

THE RELATIONSHIP OF FORM AND CONTENT IN GEORGE
SANTAYANA'S THE LAST PURITAN

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Like that of many another student of literature, my acquaintance with the writings of George Santayana consisted solely of the few sonnets and essays encountered in various anthologies, perhaps enjoyed at the time (but quite likely not entirely understood) and then almost forgotten. My real interest came about through a suggestion by Dr. Clinton C. Keeler of Santayana's novel as a possible subject for a thesis. This study has been challenging but immeasurably gratifying, for it has introduced me to a great mind and to a master of the English language.

I would like to express my gratitude to all members of the English Department who have made my graduate work an interesting and rewarding experience--Dr. Keeler, Dr. David S. Berkeley, Dr. Harry M. Campbell, Dr. Lloyd Douglas, Dr. Juanita Kytte, Dr. Cecil Williams, and Dr. Samuel Woods. To my adviser, Dr. Keeler, I am particularly grateful for his instruction, encouragement, and patience during the writing of this paper.

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"Five senses, then, to gather a small part of the infinite influences that vibrate in nature, a moderate power of understanding to interpret those senses, and an irregular, passionate fancy to overlay that interpretation --such is the endowment of the human mind. And what is its ambition? Nothing less than to construct a picture of all reality, to comprehend its own origin and that of the universe, to discover the laws of both and prophesy their destiny." (Interpretations of Poetry and Religion, p. 3)

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

When George Santayana's novel The Last Puritan was published in the United States in 1936, it was widely reviewed by critics and enthusiastically received by the general public, perhaps somewhat surprisingly, as most reviewers had qualified praise for the book as a novel. Nor would it seem that the lengthy (over six hundred pages) story of a modern Puritan entrapped by his own Puritanism, limited in action, episodic, lacking in romance and adventure, and with limited dialogue often more like philosophical lectures than ordinary speech, would have much appeal to the average novel reader. Yet the book was immediately successful, was chosen as the Book-of-the-Month, and remained the top fiction best-seller for many weeks. Daniel Cory, friend and part-time companion of Santayana's, later surmised that such enormous success of the first and last novel of the elderly philosopher (Santayana was seventy-two when the novel was finished although it had been begun some forty-five years earlier while he was an instructor at Harvard) was possible only in America "with its peculiar mass psychology." Cory did concede what must be construed as one form of literary excellence in his assumption that

Perhaps in the character of Oliver many a sober reader has found a ghost of his own soul-searchings, or in that of Mario a vicarious satisfaction of a secret desire to be perfectly at home in the world of nature and society.¹

Santayana himself thought that its appeal to the "lay" public was attributable to style but suggested that the book had depths not apparent to all. In a letter to Robert Shaw Barlow he wrote:

But the dangerous sides of the book--and it has more than one such--seem to have been overlooked or timidly ignored by the critics. . . . Granted, however, that the book went down and got a hearing, frankly I am not surprised that it is liked. Though it may become a little philosophical in places, it is written fluently, intelligibly, in pleasant English. . . . What Lonlie's friend says about being led to philosophise by an easy approach may also have had something to do with holding the attention of certain persons: but, hardly, I should say of the public at large.²

In general the first reviewers, after pointing out shortcomings in plot and characterization, were willing to dispense with accepted standards for novels and to judge The Last Puritan by its rich content. However, here again the praise was frequently qualified, sometimes through misunderstanding of Santayana's purposes or through lack of sympathy with his philosophic ideals. Harry Lorin Binsse, "finding not a dull page in it,"³ was, nonetheless, critical of the overdrawn, too symbolic characters which he considered unhealthy evidence of Santayana's misanthropy. Even William Lyons Phelps, a longtime friend of Santayana's, found no character that he could admire unreservedly and concluded that Santayana

¹Daniel Cory, "Santayana in Europe," The Atlantic Monthly, CLXXIII (May, 1944), p. 60.

²George Santayana, The Letters of George Santayana, ed. with notes by Daniel Cory (New York, 1955), pp. 309-310.

³Harry Lorin Binsse, "A New Novelist," The American Review, VI (March, 1936), p. 615.

"does not love life."⁴ A particularly biting attack was made on the "social and political gospel" of the novel by Daniel Aaron. Contrasting Oliver Alden, "ruefully but firmly consigned to the dust of the past," with Mario Van de Weyer, "a joyous reflection of what modern man should and will be,"⁵ Aaron thought that anyone who is still searching for an ideal is more spiritually akin to Oliver than to the modern Mario.

Of the first reviews that of Henry Seidel Canby was one of the most perceptive and complete in treatment of literary merit and depth of content. The novel, according to Canby, violated all the usual textbook rules for fiction writing except two--"real characters, with personality, significance, and that faculty of becoming frames of reference for one's own actual life," and drama, "spiritual drama tightened into effective scenes, the kind of drama which is incomparably the most satisfactory of all to a mature reader." Canby noted the divergence between the Latin Catholic mind and Anglo-Saxon Puritanism but suggested that Oliver's life as an inflexible Puritan whose spirit--like those of Hawthorne's characters--vibrated "more and more to the agitations of conscience and less and less to the rhythms of aggressive energy" was doomed to be sad but not necessarily tragic.⁶ Herein he thought Santayana was a better

⁴William Lyons Phelps, "As I Like It," Scribner's Magazine, XCIX (March, 1936), p. 187.

⁵Daniel Aaron, "A Postscript to The Last Puritan," The New England Quarterly, IX (December, 1936), p. 684.

⁶Henry Seidel Canby, "Education of a Puritan," The Saturday Review of Literature, XIII (February 1, 1936), p. 4. One is reminded of Santayana's statement that one of the principal charms of tragedy is the suggestion of what it might have been had it not been tragic. See George Santayana, Essays in Literary Criticism of George Santayana, ed. Irving Singer (New York, 1956), p. 371.

novelist than a social philosopher.⁷

Subsequent studies of the novel have been largely the work of philosophers, and a frequent subject has been the question of whether the philosophical implications of The Last Puritan coincided with those of Santayana's earlier writings. Their analyses of the novel as literature have been abbreviated and their evaluations, according to James C. Ballowe, questionable. When the philosophers did venture into literary criticism, their judgments are biased considerations of the work as a philosophical treatise rather than as a novel, just as Santayana's earlier treatises had been adjudged as lacking strength because of their literary style.⁸

The incongruities which he had found in Santayana's moral philosophy in The Life of Reason are traced by Eliseo Vivas in the characterizations of The Last Puritan. Three stages in the development of morality, the prerational, the rational, and the post-rational, were propounded in The Life of Reason, but only two phases are embodied in single characters in the novel. Jim Darnley is prerational morality in which "the flesh has not yet begun to flower into spirit." Likewise, Peter Alden delineates the post-rational attitude "of the man who has tried the life of reason, at least in imagination, and found it wanting."⁹ Oliver, Mario, and the Vicar present problems because not one by himself represents the rational

⁷Ibid., p. 12.

⁸James C. Ballowe, "The Art and Criticism of Santayana's The Last Puritan," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1963), p. 11.

⁹Eliseo Vivas, "From The Life of Reason to The Last Puritan," The Philosophy of George Santayana, ed. Paul Arthur Schilpp (2d ed., The Library of Living Philosophers, New York, 1951), p. 344.

man although the three combined, if they could be fused into a single personality, do correspond to Santayana's concept of a rational life.¹⁰ (In an early review of the novel Justus Buchler had also likened it to The Life of Reason but thought the combination necessary to comprise one individual capable of leading a rational life would be Jim, Mario, and Oliver.¹¹) To Vivas, individually the Vicar represents the failure of the spiritual man, Oliver the failure of the moral man, and Mario, "the young fop" who finds happiness by living "irresponsibly, even licentious-ly," is now Santayana's ideal.¹² Thus, Vivas concluded that a synthesis of happiness and morality did not actually exist in The Life of Reason and that in The Last Puritan Santayana realized it too and ended in "moral bankruptcy and a luring despair which is held precariously at bay."¹³

In a reply to the Vivas essay, as well as to criticisms by Irwin Edman and Milton Munitz, who felt that the "new spirituality" evidenced in Santayana's later philosophical writings did not completely harmonize with his earlier rational morality,¹⁴ Santayana denied any change of allegiance between The Life of Reason and his later writings but did acknowledge a change of sentiment and emphasis. Nonetheless, he affirmed

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 347-348.

¹¹Justus Buchler, "George Santayana's The Last Puritan," The New England Quarterly, IX (June, 1936), p. 283.

¹²Vivas, p. 347.

¹³Ibid., p. 350.

¹⁴See Irwin Edman, "Humanism and Post-Humanism in the Philosophy of George Santayana," The Philosophy of George Santayana, pp. 293-312; and Milton K. Munitz, "Ideals and Essences in Santayana's Philosophy," The Philosophy of George Santayana, pp. 183-215.

the perfect continuity of post-rational with rational and pre-rational morality. We begin with the instinct of animals, sometimes ferocious, sometimes placid, sometimes industrious, always self-satisfied and self-repeating; we proceed to a certain teachableness by experience, to a certain tradition and progress in the arts; we proceed further to a general reflection, to tragic discoveries, to transformed interests.¹⁵

He continued that postrationality is in effect a liberation of interest, not interest abandoned; but with its liberation reason loses its "judicial peace-making function." In turn "judicial political reason therefore may well turn upon reason emancipated and ask it to take its place among the constituent interests that a life of reason should harmonise." Santayana professed respect, even veneration, for those who renounce "the ordinary life of the world for a special vocation" while yet proclaiming that the world has a perfect right to control such inspiration.¹⁶ Yet post-rational teachings can be condemned only in that those teachings "might withdraw or withhold energies that otherwise would help to secure the common good." Even with this consequent loss, he asserted that religion and post-rational philosophy cooperate with a life of reason by being safety valves for mankind.¹⁷

Other critics have found a disparity of views in Santayana's earlier philosophy and the novel. Harry Slochower writes:

The dialectic combination of attachment and detachment which Santayana regards as the good life fails to materialize in the characters and the events. The Last Puritan swerves between a selected perspective and an

¹⁵George Santayana, "Apologia Pro Mente Sua," The Philosophy of George Santayana, p. 564.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 565.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 566.

absolute relativism, between the rational ethics of The Life of Reason and the post-rational morality of Realms of Being.¹⁸

Although not pointing to any dichotomy between Santayana's early and later ideals, Albert J. Lubell offers an interpretation similar in some aspects to that of Vivas. Jim Darnley is categorized as the prerational man, Peter Alden as the post-rational man, and Oliver, Mario, and the Vicar as the focal characters for the problem of harmonizing spirit and matter. The Vicar illustrates the failure of spirit separated from matter; Oliver, the failure of morality divorced from its metaphysical base; but Mario happily unites spirit and matter. The Last Puritan has the same message as Santayana's earlier admonition to America in The Genteel Tradition at Bay:

The Genteel Tradition was at bay . . . and had two choices open before it: either to restore the supernatural sanction for morality in all its pristine vigor and authority or else adopt a frankly naturalistic morality.¹⁹

John W. Yolton rejects the Vivas thesis that the novel marks a change in Santayana's thought concerning the marriage of spirit and matter, stating that Santayana's entire philosophy can be summarized in a phrase found in his autobiography: "obedience to matter for the sake of freedom of the mind."²⁰ Mario's "materialist indifference to spirit" is intended as ideal only in "his complete acceptance of the realm of matter" in contrast to Oliver's "dedication to spirit and the life of the

¹⁸Harry Slochower, Literature and Philosophy between Two World Wars: The Problem of Alienation in a War Culture (New York, 1964), p. 167.

¹⁹Albert J. Lubell, "George Santayana and the New England Mind," The South Atlantic Quarterly, LVII (Summer, 1958), p. 310.

²⁰John W. Yolton, "Notes on Santayana's The Last Puritan," The Philosophical Review, LX (April, 1951), p. 241.

mind."²¹ It is at this point that Yolton adds a new dimension to the body of criticism of the novel--the relationship between its philosophical and cultural implications. Since the realm of matter includes "the physical aspects of man's body and the external world as well as his social environment," the antithesis of spirit-matter in Santayana's philosophy encompasses the antitheses of mind-body and individual-society.²² A main objective of the novel is to extend the metaphysical solution to the cultural problem, a position which Yolton finds untenable.

A defense of the continuity of Santayana's ethical theory is also made by Irving Singer. Santayana was a moral relativist and neither Mario's life of reason nor Oliver's life of spirit could be established as the one moral standard for all, since "the good life for some particular individual is that life which harmonizes his various interests and passions in accordance with his 'real nature.'"²³

An essay by Frederick Conner follows the familiar theme of moral consistency by tracing similar philosophic strains in The Last Puritan and in an early drama, Lucifer. Both Lucifer and Oliver suffered from what is described in The Realm of Spirit as the distraction of the Devil, "any distraction which is internal to the spirit."²⁴ Both were victims of moralism:

the demand that the universe or God must conform to a private moral standard--the impious sin of Lucifer--or

²¹Ibid., p. 238.

²²Ibid., pp. 238-239.

²³Irving Singer, "The World of George Santayana," The Hudson Review, VII (Autumn, 1954), p. 366.

²⁴Frederick W. Conner, "Lucifer and The Last Puritan," American Literature, XXXIII (March, 1961), p. 14.

conversely, the demand that a private moral standard must have a universal sanction, the need of Oliver.²⁵

Studies of the novel as a work of literature are still few. The two aspects of literary merit and cultural criticism, which had been touched upon in the early Canby review, serve as the basis for a dissertation by James C. Ballowe "to determine the value of The Last Puritan as a novel and as a synthesis of Santayana's cultural criticism."²⁶ A detailed analysis of plot, character, and setting traces the strengths and weaknesses of the novel and Santayana's utilization of his own literary psychology. He concludes that Santayana was an amateur novelist but not unacquainted with the techniques of fiction and that, most important, he knew the value of fiction to portray truth.²⁷ As a cultural criticism the novel analyzes the failure of American society to bridge the dichotomy which evolved from the original Puritan singlemindedness of purpose:

The life of Oliver Alden illustrates the ineffectual attempts by sensitive young American intellectuals of the early twentieth century to provide a culture commensurate with the achievement of a mechanized society. Possessing the legacy of puritanism themselves, they were dissatisfied with its precipitant, the genteel tradition. But the conditions of that legacy prevented them from uniting with the vital American Will and redirecting that Will from preoccupation with the control of matter to reflection on the consequences of its control. In a 'mechanized democracy' there was no function for young intellectuals who inherited the 'agonized conscience' of their forebears. Santayana saw the atavistic puritan as a tragic figure--full of noble intentions but lacking the wherewithall to effect them.²⁸

One further study treats the structure of the novel. William H.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 18-19.

²⁶Ballowe, p. 11.

²⁷Ibid., p. 141.

²⁸Ibid., p. 205.

Marshall analyzes the structural center of the novel as the male-female myth--the incomplete, imperfect male organism in perpetual quest for perfection represented by the complete, seemingly perfect female in an imperfect world.²⁹

A review of the literature concerning The Last Puritan reveals that there has been little synthesis of the literary techniques employed and the philosophy embodied. The Ballowe dissertation (the only book-length study in the English language) evaluates the success of the literary techniques of setting, point of view, characterization, and plot. Marshall offers a brief and, I believe, incomplete theory of structure. Other analyses have identified characters as symbols for concepts found in Santayana's treatises, particularly as the prerational, rational, and post-rational morality of The Life of Reason; but no examination was made of the literary devices used in the portrayal of these concepts.

This thesis is intended as a study of the relationship between the "imaginative structure" and the "logical structure"³⁰ of The Last Puritan based on an examination of the novel and Santayana's nonfictional writings. The Last Puritan is an allegory on two levels. It depicts the age-old dilemma of the dual and contradictory nature of man as a spiritual and a physical being; secondly, it shows the failure of Western civilization to evolve a natural philosophy which provides a rational balance of these two factors in a meaningful life now that supernatural religion, which once fulfilled that function, has been eroded by the

²⁹William H. Marshall, "An Expanding Theme in The Last Puritan," The Personalist, XLV (Winter, 1964), p. 29.

³⁰These are terms used by Phillip Blair Rice in describing the relationship between content and form which was emphasized in Santayana's literary criticism. See Phillip Blair Rice, "The Philosopher as Poet and Critic," The Philosophy of George Santayana, p. 288.

the forces of modernism. Protestant nations, in which a barbaric spirit's insistence upon domination over and even denial of matter has lacked the civilizing check of the Catholic Church as an external authority, have witnessed a more rapid decline of Christianity, although Catholicism too has been subject to skepticism. Philosophic thought replacing religious authority in Protestant cultures, while interrelated and mutually influential, has varied according to national characteristics and historical events. Santayana saw a singularly tragic aspect to its development in America, where a cultural schism, resulting in a cultural aridity, existed. Americans had brought with them a philosophy embodying a strict morality based on religious sanctions, but the frontier conditions of a new country had been more conducive to materialism. In the latter part of the nineteenth and the early part of the twentieth centuries, American intellectual thought, now deprived of its supernatural authority but still clinging to the stale vestiges of Calvinistic philosophy, produced only the "genteel tradition" by which man sought meaning in his existence. On the other side of the chasm, materialistic big business was its own excuse for being and left intellectual and cultural activities to the ladies. Sensitive Americans, finding no means of spiritual expression in religion or the arts, turned inward or sought refuge in Europe. Such was the heritage of Oliver Alden, whose spiritual integrity destined him to be the ultimate Puritan.

The structure and symbolism of the novel are integral parts of the spirit-matter antithesis. Christ, in Santayana's unorthodox interpretation of Christianity, exemplifies perfect reconciliation of spirit and matter. The structure of the novel is the life pilgrimage of a Christ-like Oliver Alden, beset with the temptations or spiritual distractions of the Flesh, the World, and the Devil. Lesser patterns of symbolism,

although not primarily religious, illustrate the philosophic origin of all metaphoric images by emphasizing the moral implications which man has ascribed to physical reality.

The body of this essay studies the correlation of philosophic theme and literary technique by tracing the historic background of the Protestant imbalance of spirit and matter, the theme of the novel; by analyzing the allegorical and symbolic structure of the novel; and by examining the lesser symbolic patterns as evidence of the conflict between spirit and matter.

"A close and credible insight into spiritual life can . . . extend only to the limits of a man's race, temperament, and habit." (The Realm of Spirit, p. 45)

CHAPTER II

MATERIALS

The subtitle of The Last Puritan informs the reader that it is A Memoir in the Form of a Novel. The seed of the novel was planted in Santayana's mind by an observation made during the forty years which he spent in Boston as a student and later as a professor of philosophy at Harvard University. This observation was "the decline of an age--the age of great merchants," which was illustrated in the lives of several promising young men who were unable to fulfill their intellectual, aesthetic, or spiritual promise--either by being submerged by the materialism of the times or by dying young:

Either their fortune was inadequate, their virtues inadequate, or their health and stamina were inadequate. Gently, or sadly, or cynically, they had to bow themselves off the stage. But this decline regards only a phase of society, not the life of society as a whole, which in New England was growing richer and more vigorous as it passed out of the period of great merchants into that of 'big business' and was merged in the vast American vortex.¹

Some of these young men in whom Santayana had discerned the noblest of Puritan characteristics served as models for Oliver Alden, the hero of The Last Puritan. During the forty-five year gestation period of the

¹George Santayana, The Middle Span, Vol. II: Persons and Places (New York, 1945), pp. 106-107.

novel, the author's observation of American life fused with his moral philosophy and ontological theory into the picture of the ultimate Puritan:

To what insoluble conflict between the world and spirit could such failure be due? As I resolved this doubt the whole nature and history of Oliver began to grow clearer in my mind. My dead friends had all had philosophic keenness and moral fervour; they had all been fearless and independent in mind; but none of them seems to have found matter fitted for his energies, or to have had the intellectual power requisite to dominate his circumstances and turn what might be unfavourable in them into a triumph of expression. Here, then, was the essential tragedy of the late-born Puritan, made concrete in several instances and illustrated before my eyes. This, added to a certain aridity, difficulty, and confusion which I could feel in the spirits of the elder New England worthies, and in my remarkable teachers and colleagues at Harvard, supplied moral substance for those sketches of manners and types which I could draw from observation.²

One of the difficulties of the novel and one that has not been fully treated in its body of criticism is the link between the moral philosophy and the cultural criticism, i.e., tracing of the tragedy of the modern Puritan to its source. Oliver's tragic failure to adjust to his physical, social, and moral world is attributed to the Puritan characteristic of spiritual dominance, while Mario's worldly success is due to his Catholic heritage of piety to the natural world. This concept of Puritanism has not always been understood or accepted by critics of the novel. An early reviewer stated that the author in The Last Puritan, as in his earlier commentary on America in "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy," "betrays little apparent knowledge of Puritanism, past or present, using it only for ulterior purposes."³ In a conversation with Santayana

²George Santayana, "The Last Puritan Preface," Essays in Literary Criticism of George Santayana, pp. 248-249.

³John Wright Buckham, "Santayana's Last Puritan Again," The Personalist, XVIII (July, 1937), p. 292.

concerning Schneider's book The Puritan Mind, Herbert W. Schneider remembers their variance of opinions. Santayana thought Emerson the embodiment of Puritanism:

Then he gave a definition of a Puritan which was wonderful from his point of view, and of course fitted Oliver perfectly . . . He wasn't much interested in the Puritans in the narrower sense the way I had described them.⁴

A letter to William Haller about Haller's book The Rise of Puritanism defines Santayana's singular concept of Puritanism and its origin:

Doubtless you are more attached than I to the liberty of thought and faith into which you feel the whole movement empties; but it does empty there; and what I had in mind was something that I imagined inspired that movement from the beginning and the challenge to every fact or precept, not by some uncriticised prejudice in oneself, but by pure spirit.⁵

Santayana did not interpret Puritanism as a strict moral code but as a philosophical concept described in the Prologue of the novel as "a natural reaction against nature,"⁶ and Oliver's dilemma "was simply the tragedy of the spirit when it's not content to understand but wishes to govern." (p. 10) In atavistic Oliver this Puritanical characteristic reached its last or ultimate phase of spirit condemning its own dominance, and "he convinced himself, on puritan grounds, that it was wrong to be a puritan." (p. 6)

Clearly a knowledge of the connection between this concept of spiritual domination and the historical antecedents of Puritanism is essential for an understanding of the novel. Santayana's fullest

⁴Horace Kallen, et al., "Conversations on Santayana," Antioch Review, XIX (Summer, 1959), p. 262.

⁵Santayana, The Letters of George Santayana, p. 334.

⁶George Santayana, The Last Puritan: A Memoir in the Form of a Novel (New York, 1936), p. 6. Subsequent references to The Last Puritan will appear parenthetically in the text.

definition of spirit is given in The Realm of Spirit, the last book in the four-volume exposition of his ontology. Significantly, The Realm of Spirit was in progress at least part of the time that the novel was being written and, in addition to the similarity of theme, provides the idea for the basic structure of the novel, a point which will be discussed later in this essay. As Santayana defines it,

. . . spirit is only the inner light of actuality or attention which floods all life as men actually live it on earth. It is roughly the same as feeling or thought; it might be called consciousness.⁷

It is a moral stress of varying scope and intensity, full of will and selectiveness, arising in animal bodies, and raising their private vicissitudes into moral experience . . . a personal and moral focus of life, where the perspectives of nature are reversed as in a mirror and attached to the fortune of a single soul.⁸

Spirit is "the vital intellectual and moral actuality of every moment."⁹ It is "the moral fruition of physical life,"¹⁰ and an individual's "love and pursuit of the good."¹¹

According to his theory, spirit is not supernatural in the religious sense of the word. Spirit is born of the psyche and has its only possible locus a particular animal organism whose circumstances determine its vocation.¹² It awakens when the psyche achieves a certain harmony, but perfect harmony within the psyche is rare and comes only in moments.

⁷George Santayana, The Realm of Spirit: Book Fourth of Realms of Being (New York, 1940), p. vii.

⁸Ibid., p. viii.

⁹Ibid., p. 7.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 8.

¹¹Ibid., p. 294.

¹²Ibid., p. 43.

Because of their inextricable relationship, the spirit suffers from the psyche's maladjustments and conflicts. Either the spirit may not develop to its fullest potential, or it may grow distracted by contrary demands.¹³ Even the fundamental functions of nutrition and reproduction may give rise to spiritual distractions by causing conflict within the psyche. As the psyche becomes more sophisticated and involved in social, political, and economic affairs, the spirit suffers from a second distraction, the demands of a world which says it is the spirit's duty to serve its interests. The final distraction is that within the spirit itself, its concern for self that poses as omnipotence, forgetting that the spirit has no materials or instruments for its own existence except those of its rejected body and world.¹⁴ Oliver's life, characterized by dominance of spirit and rejection of the natural world, follows this pattern from birth through the distractions of the body, the world, and of spirit itself, to final charity and death.

Santayana cautions that spirit is not liberated from its distractions by rejecting its body and the world but by understanding them. Freedom from the distraction of the devil, which may be exorcised but never destroyed while spirit lives, similarly comes from understanding: "Health and knowledge: essentially nothing more is requisite for liberation from distraction by the flesh, the world, and the devil."¹⁵ He cites the figure of Christ as exemplifying "supreme spirit incarnate in a human creature," thus offering a model for salvation for spirit in all

¹³Ibid., pp. 120-122, passim.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 130-181, passim.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 195.

followers who truly understand the meaning of his life. A liberated spirit neither seeks to deny or dominate matter, but, as in the person of Christ, recognizes that humility and piety toward the material world are necessary to spirituality:

Christ in the Gospels continually tells us that he is subject to 'the Father,' [symbolizing the realm of matter in Santayana's interpretation] who has 'sent' him into this world. Liberation as a Christian should desire it, cannot be liberation from fortune or domination over it. Spirit is sent into this world: it does not command this world, much less create it.¹⁶

By accepting and submitting to an impartial and sometimes cruel natural economy, spirit is by that impartiality liberated from the accidental bonds of its particular body and circumstances:

In Christ spirit did not need to be saved, it was free initially; yet it was inspired to love and willing to suffer; neither tempted, like the gods of Greece, to become an accomplice to human passions, nor like Lucifer to shut itself up in solitary pride. It was humble towards universal power, wisely respectful toward the realm of matter. Salvation could not consist pretending to be independent, that is, in becoming mad. It could not consist in correcting the divine economy, and becoming creative, that is, in becoming guilty. Humility, piety, is a prerequisite to spirituality.¹⁷

Applied to the humanistic field of religion, this passage describes the essential difference between the Catholic tradition of Mario and Oliver's puritan heritage which are contrasted in The Last Puritan. By his acceptance of the realm of matter as a necessary part of his being, Mario, in the manner of Christ, was "born clear" with "the courage of [his] full human nature." (p. 4) Oliver inherited the Calvinistic philosophy of spiritual omnipotence and consequent rejection of the natural world. Although neither boy subscribed to the dogmas of his respective

¹⁶Ibid., p. 203.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 204-205.

religion (until Mario's reentry into the Catholic church in the Epilogue), each personality was molded by the culture that his religious heritage had developed. In an essay on the Anglican church, Santayana described his view of Protestantism in three motifs: "to revert to primitive Christianity, to inspire moral and political reform, and to accept the religious witness of the inner man."¹⁸ In contrast to the latter characteristic, the Catholic "has renounced or never thought of maintaining, the authority of the inner man."¹⁹ Each boy represents a phase in the moral history of man which has gone beyond a literal belief in religious dogma but lives by a philosophy growing out of that dogma, yet lacking the absolutism of a religious sanction. In Oliver the "inner man" still ruled without the respect toward the natural world needed for a rational life. Mario's heritage of external authority was reflected in piety toward matter but without the fuller spiritual development apparent in Oliver.

Santayana had given his theory of a rational life in The Life of Reason, a five-volume masterpiece divided into Reason in Common Sense, Reason in Society, Reason in Religion, Reason in Art, and Reason in Science. Critics and Santayana alike acknowledge that the best historical support of his ideal of reason is found in Reason in Religion, which traces the moral history of mankind.²⁰ In this book Santayana accounts for the birth of Protestantism and its subsequent evolution into

¹⁸George Santayana, "The English Church," Soliloquies in England and Later Soliloquies (New York, 1924), p. 84.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 86.

²⁰George Santayana, "The Idler and His Works," The Idler and His Works and Other Essays, ed. and with a preface by Daniel Cory (New York, 1957), p. 16.

skepticism and German subjective philosophy by the tendency of the barbaric Nordic races to assert the authority of the inner self without the external civilizing restraints of society, religion, and art as mediums of spiritual expression.

In 1910 Santayana's Interpretations of Poetry and Religion had advanced the theory that both religion and poetry interpret life and man's aspirations symbolically. Retaining this premise, he analyzed in Reason in Religion the significance and function which religion has had at its different stages. The Life of Reason, "which is simply the unity given to all existence by a mind in love with the good,"²¹ is pursued through the mediums of society, art, science, and religion. Although a person's religion is a "historic accident," just as his language is,²² the nature of religion makes it a "more conscious and direct pursuit of the Life of Reason" than man's other endeavors.²³ It shares two functions which reason demands for its ideals--absolute moral decisions to which all else must be subordinated and man's emancipation from personal limitations.²⁴ Religion seeks a Life of Reason through the imagination but errs by demanding for itself "literal truth and moral authority, neither of which it possesses."²⁵ Furthermore, the Hebrew tradition augmented this

²¹George Santayana, Introduction and Reason in Common Sense, Vol. I: The Life of Reason or the Phases of Human Progress (2d ed., New York, 1932), p. 46.

²²George Santayana, Reason in Religion, Vol. III: The Life of Reason or the Phases of Human Progress (New York, 1933), p. 5.

²³Ibid., p. 8. Much of the wording in this and the other resumé's of Santayana's writings, even that which is not in direct quotation, is that of Santayana, as it is almost impossible to render the ideas in another manner.

²⁴Ibid., p. 7.

²⁵Ibid., p. 10.

illusion through monotheism, which usurped the Greek acceptance of "God" or "gods" as varying expressions of the same influences in their physical and moral lives.²⁶

Man's first stage of understanding was superstition, in which he was guided only by instinct and feeling, limited categories by which primitive man's experience gave moral relevance to the world.²⁷ His "fear created the gods." When external powers checked or disturbed his life, he learned to gear his behaviour according to the degrees of friendliness or utility he encountered in men, animals, and nature.²⁸ Yet there remained much in mind--"dreams, apparition, warnings"--and in nature--"luck, disease, tempest, death, victory"--that was inexplicable, yet could not be ignored. Apprehensive primitive man could attribute that which he did not understand only to spirits.²⁹ His impotence also had a more positive aspect, since it forced him to recognize his dependence. From such considerations came proof of God's existence

as mankind originally conceived it and (when religion is spontaneous) perceives it still. There is such an order in experience that we find our desires doubly dependent on something which, because it disregards our will, we call an external power . . . Whatever is serious in religion, whatever is bound up in morality and fate, is contained in those plain experiences of dependence and of affinity to that on which we depend. The rest is poetry, or mythical philosophy . . .³⁰

Mythology's true function is "to present and interpret events in terms relative to spirit." Man understands the direct and obvious uses

²⁶Ibid., p. 14.

²⁷Ibid., p. 18.

²⁸Ibid., p. 28.

²⁹Ibid., p. 29.

³⁰Ibid., p. 30.

of things to his will, but the inner machinery of things remains obscure. Therefore he conceives them only partially and superficially and assigns them, poetically, some counterpart to be their characters and souls.³¹ Mythology then has two factors: "a moral consciousness and a corresponding poetic conception of things."³² As myth travels among people, the poetry tends to dominate.³³

By the time mythology appeared in Western literature, it had gained a highly articulate form in which the gods and their attributes and histories were accepted although their sources and rational interpretations were no longer clear, much like a child's inheritance of a religion which continues to influence him morally even after he questions or even rejects it.³⁴ Gods in the early religions described in the Vedas had been closely identified with natural elements;³⁵ as man learned to control his external conditions, he neglected his external perceptions which inspired myths and became interested in their inner suggestions. By Homer's time the revolution had been completed. What had once been a symbol for material facts became a representation of an ideal.³⁶

A study of the Hebrew religion provides the background of Christianity and leads to an understanding of the fundamental difference between the Catholic and Protestant faiths, since

³¹Ibid., p. 54.

³²Ibid., p. 55.

³³Ibid., p. 56.

³⁴Ibid., p. 59.

³⁵Ibid., p. 62.

³⁶Ibid., p. 65.

Christianity in its Patristic form was an adaptation of Hebrew religion in the Graeco-Roman world, and later, in the Protestant movement, a readaptation in the same to what we may call the Teutonic spirit. In the first adaptation, Hebrew positivism was wonderfully refined, transformed into a world of redemption, and endowed with a semi-pagan mythology, a pseudo-Platonic metaphysics, and a quasi-Roman organisation. In the second adaptation, Christianity received a new basis and standard in the spontaneous faith of the individual; and, as the traditions thus undermined in principle gradually dropped away, it was reduced by the German theologians to a romantic and mystical pantheism.³⁷

The early Hebrews had a natural religion expressing their conceptions about the natural world.³⁸ They were extremely conscious of their tribal unity and assigned as chief function of their god, in whatever form he took, protection of the tribe, and "to this exclusive devotion of Jehovah to Israel, Israel responded by a devotion to Jehovah no less exclusive," first by denying their worship to other gods, then by denying the existence of other gods.³⁹ As the political decline of Israel did not bear out Jehovah's omnipotence and favor for Israel, a new explanation was needed and the prophets conceived of attributing their political misfortune to Jehovah's wrath over Israel's immorality and infidelity.⁴⁰ Thus the ideal of the new religion urged by the prophets was still material and political although "by assigning them a magic value to morality they gave a moral value to religion."⁴¹ These moral ideals were codified into law and strict observance was both an act of prudence and an act of worship.⁴² Although the experiment failed and Hebrew

³⁷Ibid., p. 69.

³⁸Ibid., p. 70.

³⁹Ibid., p. 71.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 72.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 74.

⁴²Ibid., p. 75.

political misfortune continued, the Law and the Covenant were not discredited.⁴³ However, as calamities continued, a new element of spiritualization was introduced. While still attributing misfortunes to wickedness, they realized that puritanic virtue would not insure political fortune. Nor were marks of God's favor in the past sufficient for the future; their religion became notably spiritualized. Jewish life entered a "pietistic, priestly, almost ascetic phase" while still retaining the old positivistic background in their expectation that their tribulations would be short-lived.⁴⁴

With Christianity came a truly spiritualized concept of the kingdom of heaven--a life after death--rejecting the old Hebrew ideal of prosperity as a mark of God's love.⁴⁵ Neither was a reasonable ideal:

In the history of Jewish and Christian ethics the pendulum has swung between irrational extremes without ever stopping at that point of equilibrium at which rest alone is possible.

Yet the point was reached, if not recognized, at the point "when the prophets saw that it was human interest that governed right and wrong and conduct that created destiny," but passed through ignorance, superstition, and national bigotry.⁴⁶ On the other hand, the prophetic religions replaced the old Hebrew materialism with a new form of materialism in the form of a double mythology in which "moral or naturalistic myths were now reinforced by others of a historical character, to the effect that former myths had been revealed supernaturally," and then extended the authority

⁴³Ibid., p. 76.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 78.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 79.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 80.

of that belief through the Bible and the Church.⁴⁷

Although Christ's teaching alone--"which is pure Hebraism reduced to its spiritual essence"--was not sufficient impetus, the spread of Christianity over the Roman Empire was made possible by the infusion of Greek thought and pagan habits.⁴⁸ In Western man's adaptation of the Gospels by addition of a neo-Platonic system of metaphysics and pagan customs and sentiments, the Catholic Church, particularly in the daily practices of the Catholic people, retained a considerable amount of paganism or natural religion, resting on human nature, within their Christian tradition. In replacing the materialism of paganism with supernaturalism, the new religion did not entirely abandon its natural basis.⁴⁹ This blend of pagan philosophy and custom was a corruption of Hebraism but a happy one, "for by this marriage with paganism Christianity fitted itself to live and work in the civilised world."⁵⁰ In pagan Christianity were united

first the genius of paganism, the faculty of expressing spiritual experience in myth and external symbol, and second, the experience of disillusion, forcing that pagan imagination to take wing from earth and to decorate no longer the political and material circumstances of life, but rather to remove beyond the clouds and constitute its realm of spirit beyond the veil of time and nature in a posthumous and metaphysical sphere. A mythical economy abounding in points of attachment to human experience and in genial interpretation of life, yet lifted beyond visible nature and filling a reported world, a world believed in on hearsay or, as it is called, in faith--that is Catholicism.⁵¹

The Reformation of the Catholic Church or Protestantism actually

⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 81-82.

⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 84-85.

⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 99-106, passim.

⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 106-107.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 108.

began with the invasion of the Roman Empire by barbarians who adopted Christianity, "not because it represented their religious needs or aspirations," but because they were unable to withstand the cultural and social organization of which it was a part.⁵² In their childlike simplicity they were easily converted, but the conversion was superficial, and pagan Christianity or Catholicism remained a foreign religion to them because

they were without the experience and plastic imagination which had given it birth. It might catch them unawares and prevail over them for a time, but even during that period it could not root out from barbarian souls anything opposed to it which subsisted there. It was thus that the Roman Church hatched the duck's egg of Protestantism.⁵³

This religious maladjustment emerged even before the Reformation in well-meant but insidious gifts which ostensibly were to serve Christianity and which have been regarded as emanations of Christianity--Gothic art, chivalrous sentiment, and even scholastic philosophy. In truth such additions barbarized the church, adding an element quite different from the paganized Christianity of the South and the East.⁵⁴ Without experience to guide them, "without cumulative traditions or a visible past," Catholicism of the North missed (and continues to miss) the meaning of "renunciation of things earthly and the merely metaphysical glory of the transfigured life."⁵⁵

During the Middle Ages as human genius advanced, a new paganism in the form of humanism flourished, particularly in the countries formerly pagan:

⁵²Ibid., p. 109.

⁵³Ibid., p. 110.

⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 110-111.

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 111-112.

Religion began in certain quarters to be taken philosophically; its relation to life began to be understood, that it was a poetic expression of need, hope, and ignorance.⁵⁶

The humanists, although often checked by sincere Church zealots, might have succeeded in their more or less conscious attempts to change the Church into a form of paganism, "an ornament and expression of human life" to please the world while still retaining Christianity as a form, had it not been "overwhelmed by the fanatical Reformation and the fanatical reaction against it."⁵⁷ The Church had encountered another force and was forced to retrench. The Teutonic races awakened to the fact that, although sincerely attached to what they had assimilated in Christianity, "they inwardly abhorred and rejected the rest."⁵⁸ Protestantism in its external doctrinal form is a form of Christianity, retaining the Bible and certain patristic doctrines, yet in spirit and inward inspiration it is independent of both the Gospels and Catholicism:

It is simply the natural religion of the Teutons raising its head above the flood of Roman and Judean influence. Its character may be indicated by saying that it is a religion of pure spontaneity, of emotional freedom, deeply respecting itself but scarcely deciphering its purposes. It is the self-consciousness of a spirit in process of incubation, jealous of its potential, averse to definition and finalities of any kind because it can itself discern nothing fixed or final. It is adventurous and puzzled by the world, full of rudimentary virtues and clear fire, energetic, faithful, and rebellious to experience, inexperienced in all matters of art and mind. It accordingly mistakes vitality, both in itself and the universe, for spiritual life.⁵⁹

Teutonic religion or Protestantism is the exact opposite of the unworldly and ascetic Gospel. Protestant emphasis on prosperity, success, labor,

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 118.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 119.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 120.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 115.

punctilious righteousness, and optimistic benevolence is more closely related to the worldly and pre-rational form of Hebraism of the Old Testament. Only through historic accident had the faith natural to barbarism appeared as a form of Christianity, and Protestantism has always been more characterized by its spirit than by any Christian dogmas which it retains. Yet this spirit of "instinctive trustfulness and self-assertion" was not born with Protestantism and "is not only prior to Christianity but more primitive than reason and even than man."⁶⁰ [In The Last Puritan Mario refers to this characteristic as the dragon which had been crawling over the earth since the Garden of Eden. (p. 526)] But in the barbaric Northern races spirit lacked the traditions which were needed to discipline it. In religion this attitude of inward authority

involves two corollaries: first, what in accordance with Hebrew precedent may be called symbolically faith in God, that is, confidence in one's own impulse and destiny, a confidence which the world in the end is sure to reward; and second, abomination of all contrary religious tenets and practices--of asceticism, for instance, because it denies the will; of idolatry and myth, because they render divinity concrete rather than relative to inner cravings and essentially responsive; finally of tradition and institutional authority, because these likewise jeopardise the soul's experimental development, as in profound isolation, she wrestles with reality and with her own inspiration.⁶¹

The spirit, which in the Nordic races lacked the chastening and civilizing influence of experience and tradition found in Latin Catholic cultures, could only lead to Protestantism's "gradual and inevitable descent into a pious scepticism."⁶² Finally as Christian dogma and ethics disintegrated, "Absolute Egotism appeared openly on the surface in the shape

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 116.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 123.

⁶²Ibid., p. 121.

of German speculative philosophy."⁶³ This form of Protestantism marks its exit from Christianity and now looks to social life and natural science.⁶⁴

As the dissolution of pagan mythology had worked itself out in pantheism among the Stoics, the dissolution of mythology among the Protestants also ended in pantheism.⁶⁵ During the thousand-year disintegration of Greek mythology, "paganism lived on inertia, by accretion from the Orient, and by philosophic reinterpretation."⁶⁶ One of the first interpretations was Platonism, which by attaching "divinity exclusively to the moral element" turned paganism "toward supernatural and revealed religion, and away from its own naturalistic principle."⁶⁷ On the other side, the Stoic interpretation "reverted to the natural forces which had been the chief basis for the traditional deities" and ended in pantheism.⁶⁸ In pantheism nature is given moral authority over man because nature has been substituted for the traditional and ideal object of religion. All events in nature are equally good, and the pantheist's true virtue is conformity to nature.⁶⁹

Thus the dissolution of mythology left two philosophies with contradictory elements. Platonism hypostasized and divorced mythical ideas

⁶³Ibid., p. 125.

⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 125-126.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 130.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 131.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 132.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 135.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 137.

from their natural grounds while Stoicism turned to a worship of nature.⁷⁰ Christianity was characterized by a similar duality:

Being a doctrine of redemption, like neo-Platonism, it tended to deny the natural values of this life; but, being a doctrine of creation and providential government, comparable in a way to the Stoic, it had an ineradicable inward tendency toward pantheism, and toward a consequent acceptance of both the goods and evils of this world as sanctioned and required by providence.⁷¹

Although the contradiction of the Christian doctrine was apparent to many, Western Christianity harbored the inconsistency rather than completely surrender its naturalistic instincts:

It settled down to the conviction that God created the world and redeemed it; that the soul is naturally good and needs salvation.⁷²

The conflict of these ambiguous elements can be found in patristic writings, particularly the writings of St. Augustine.⁷³ To reconcile the contradiction of his God, St. Augustine attributed evil to another mythical agent, Sin, which was so original that it was responsible for itself.⁷⁴ Augustine's dilemma of acknowledging God both as a physical power and as an idealization produced sad effects in his doctrine and feeling: arbitrary predestination, eternal damnation of innocents, evil for the glory of God.⁷⁵ Despite his cruel and distorted doctrine, Christian devotion and charity continued in him,

⁷⁰Ibid., pp. 138-139.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 139.

⁷²Ibid., pp. 149-150.

⁷³Ibid., p. 151.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 168.

⁷⁵Ibid., pp. 170-171.

and Saint Augustine never ceased, by a happy inconsistency, to bewail the sins and to combat the heresies which his God was stealthily nursing, so that in their melodramatic punishment his glory might be more beautifully manifested.⁷⁶

Both Luther and Calvin claimed Augustine as master, emphasizing "his more fanatical side, and this very predestinarian and absolutist doctrine."⁷⁷

[The Calvinistic philosophy of the "agonized conscience" described in "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy" appears to derive from this doctrine.]

From the combination of attention on the Old Testament and their metaphysical habits of thought, German pantheism was inevitable. Popular piety continued to emerge in emotional sects, but

academic and cultivated Protestantism became every day pale and rationalistic. Mediocre natures continued to rehearse the old platitudes and tread the slippery middle course of one orthodoxy or another; but distinguished minds could no longer treat such survivals as more than allegories, historic or mythical illustrations of general spiritual truths. So Lessing, Goethe, and the idealists in Germany, and after them such lay prophets as Carlyle and Emerson, had for Christianity only an inessential respect. They drank their genuine inspiration directly from nature, from history, from the total personal apprehension they might have of life. In them speculative philosophy rediscovered its affinity to neo-Platonism; in other words, Christian philosophy was washed clear of its legendary alloy to become a pure cosmic speculation.⁷⁸

Santayana's Reason in Religion thus traces through the moral history of the Western world the origin of the fundamental difference between the Nordic and pagan Catholic (Mediterranean) cultures, contrasted in The Last Puritan by the Nordic Protestant Oliver and the half-Latin Catholic Mario. Catholicism, which combined the pagan genius of attaching value

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 171.

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 172.

to external experiences and the Gospel attribute of spiritually transcending them, has produced cultures in which men have recognized and respected the external world, a necessity for a life of reason, since it is human interests which determine moral values. Their emphasis on redemption encourages the classic attitude of the natural man's projection of himself in action, art, and intellect.

Protestantism, on the other hand, is a result of the Nordic barbaric tendency of inward speculation attempting to assimilate a religion which limited experience and civilization had not the maturity to understand. By its failure to comprehend the Catholic principle of renunciation, the Nordic mind saw the external not as an inverted image by which the external image became a symbol of the emotion evoked in the individual mind, but instead worked itself into pantheism, in which the external world had an incipient order and power; from there, it became human duty to find one's place in the world--a "world-worship." In Germany, the final stages came in speculative philosophy--"subjectivity in thought and willfulness in morals."⁷⁹

Tempered by national characteristics, racial temperament, and historical and geographic circumstances, Protestantism worked itself out in varying philosophies in the countries whose cultures it has dominated--Germany, England, and the United States. The Last Puritan is the fictional account of this evolution shown through the individual characters.

In an address delivered before the Philosophical Union of the University of California at Berkeley on August 25, 1911, Santayana described the heir to Protestant Puritanism in America as "The Genteel Tradition in

⁷⁹George Santayana, Egotism in German Philosophy (New ed., London, 1939), p. ix.

American Philosophy." America, he said, had produced two distinct mentalities, a schism between intellectual and practical interests: "In all of the higher things of the mind--in religion, in literature, and in the moral emotions," the hereditary beliefs and standards of the founding fathers had survived, while "the expression of the instincts, practice, and discoveries of the younger generation" had produced "inventions and industry and social organisation." Santayana described the diremption in an oft-quoted metaphor:

This division may be found symbolised in American architecture: a neat comfortable reproduction of the colonial mansion--with some modern comforts introduced surreptitiously--stands beside the skyscraper. The American Will inherits the skyscraper; the American Intellect inhabits the colonial mansion. The one is the sphere of the American man; the other, at least predominantly of the American woman. The one is all aggressive enterprise; the other is all genteel tradition.⁸⁰

This schism can be traced to its source in the Calvinistic philosophy of the early settlers to which the academic philosophy of the nineteenth and early twentieth century America had been grafted. Here again, Santayana emphasizes his concept of Puritanism, not as religious dogma, but a philosophical concept of the "agonised conscience," which he defines:

Calvinism, essentially, asserts three things; that sin exists, that sin is punished, and that it is beautiful that sin should exist to be punished . . . To be a Calvinist philosophically is to feel a fierce pleasure in the existence of misery, especially of one's own, in that this misery seems to manifest the fact that the Absolute is irresponsible or infinite or holy.⁸¹

The system of an agonized conscience is a logical outcome of the circumstances of the early American settlers who developed an extreme

⁸⁰George Santayana, "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy," Winds of Doctrine: Studies in Contemporary Opinion (New York, 1913), p. 188.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 189.

"vigilance over conduct and an absolute demand for personal integrity," not only as a religious heritage but as a practical virtue with which to cope with life in a new land. This attitude in turn bore fruits and "helped to relax the pressure of external circumstances and indirectly the pressure of the agonised conscience within."⁸² Then the second American mentality was born, and gradually "Calvinism lost its basis in American life."⁸³

Some Americans reverted to the sources of the tradition; others abandoned parts of their philosophy, hoping by this expedience to unite their practical and intellectual lives. Meanwhile, those of special sensibilities--for example, Poe, Hawthorne, and Emerson--could find nothing in the genteel tradition to digest and thus turned inward.⁸⁴ While they managed to escape "the mediocrity of the genteel tradition in their own lives," they could supply nothing by which others might escape.⁸⁵ Santayana found no examples of successful efforts to elude the genteel tradition which had also established a system to replace it. The humorists pointed to its contradictions but did not abandon it, just as the Renaissance intellectuals had not abandoned the Catholic tradition because there was no articulate replacement.⁸⁶

The churches offered no new philosophy to meet the changing times but merely emphasized the more evangelical elements and minimized the

⁸²Ibid., p. 190.

⁸³Ibid., p. 191.

⁸⁴Ibid., pp. 191-192.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 193.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 201.

brimstone element. "Yet," Santayana stated in 1911, "philosophic Calvinism, with a theory of life that would perfectly justify hell-fire and infant damnation if they happened to exist, still dominates the traditional metaphysics."⁸⁷ However, idealism, as the traditional metaphysics was called, had yet a second ingredient, transcendentalism. Transcendentalism as a philosophy was produced by the romantic era in Germany and also, independently, in America. In its true sense it is not a set of dogmas or facts but a method. It is "systematic subjectivism." As a method it is legitimate but not as a system of the universe, being a transcendental myth evolved by German romanticism.⁸⁸

Both as a method and myth, transcendentalism found its way into American philosophy,

for the transcendental method appealed to the individualistic and revolutionary temper of their youth, while the transcendental myths enabled them to find a new status for their inherited theology, and to give what facts of it they cared to preserve some semblance of philosophical backing.⁸⁹

If transcendental myth offered a haven for theology, its original form as a method also had an affinity to the American mind:

It embodied, in a radical form, the spirit of protestantism, as distinguished from its inherited doctrine; it was autonomous, undismayed, calmly revolutionary; it felt that Will was deeper than Intellect; it focussed everything here and now, and asked all things to show their credentials at the bar of the young self, and to prove their value for the latest born moment.⁹⁰

This was characteristically American, exemplified by Emerson's "self-trust" although Emerson himself retained transcendentalism as a pure

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 206.

⁸⁸Ibid., pp. 193-194.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 195.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 196.

method, never projecting it into a system of transcendental myth, and "returned to experience, to history, to poetry, to the natural sciences," for his affirmations.⁹¹ Furthermore, Emerson's search for truth led him to detachment, unworldliness, and contemplation. In this Emerson was a representative, not just of his country and age, but of universal intelligence.⁹²

Walt Whitman did abandon the genteel tradition, and thus educated Americans did not find him representative of their culture [just as Peter Alden pointed out in The Last Puritan]. In carrying democracy into psychology and morals, he reached an unintellectual and self-indulgent pantheism. His work perhaps may offer the beginnings of "a noble moral imagination," but his own imagination was reduced to "a passive sensorium for the registering of impression."⁹³

Henry and William James also escaped the genteel tradition, Henry James through the classic way of understanding it and William James through the romantic way of eluding it. Henry James adopted the point of view of the outer world and analyzed the genteel tradition as the subject matter of his writings. The source of William James's liberty was his personal spontaneity and vitality which enabled him to continue the genteel tradition into its opposite.⁹⁴ He offered the theory of thought and truth called pragmatism, but, developed chiefly to contradict intellectualism, it offered only a partial and external view of the mind.⁹⁵

⁹¹Ibid., p. 197.

⁹²Ibid., p. 199.

⁹³Ibid., pp. 202-203.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 204.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 211.

James's empirical and romantic theory seemed to Santayana no truer than idealism or Christian orthodoxy, but it did have the virtue of challenging the monopoly of the genteel tradition and offering an alternative.⁹⁶ Santayana concluded his address with the hope that Americans could come to a true understanding of nature, of themselves, and of the world.

With his belief in the inner authority of the Nordic races undisciplined by experience and tradition as the philosophic core of Protestantism, his assessment of the stale remnants of Calvinism and transcendentalism as the dominant forces in American philosophy, his observation of the decline of young men of great promise, Santayana had all the rich sources of inspiration for The Last Puritan which he had said were available to the modern poet:

the spectacle of a varied and agitated society, a world which is the living microcosm of its own history and presents in one picture many races, arts, and religions.⁹⁷

However, poetry (and, by inference, the novel) has a higher function than an aesthetic recording of experience. The poet performs his ultimate function when he portrays "the ideals of experience and destiny," devoting himself "to the loving expression of the religion that exists, or . . . to the heralding of one which he believes to be possible."⁹⁸

Santayana had presented an ideal for life in The Life of Reason. In religious terms, he described a rational life as composed of the two elements of piety and spirituality.⁹⁹ Piety "in its nobler and Roman

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 211.

⁹⁷George Santayana, "The Poetry of Barbarism," Interpretations of Poetry and Religion (New York, 1957), p. 168.

⁹⁸Santayana, "The Elements of Poetry," *ibid.*, p. 286.

⁹⁹Santayana, Reason in Religion, p. 276.

sense" is defined as "man's reverent attachment to the sources of his being and the steadying of his life by that attachment," its objects being "parents first, then family, ancestry, and country; finally humanity at large and the whole natural cosmos." The source of piety is instinct, but to acknowledge instinct as the basis for moral life is no debasement because piety has greater wisdom than an imperfectly enlightened intellect, which

gauges things impersonally by their intrinsic values since intellect is itself a sort of disembodied and universal function; it would tend to disregard material condition and that irrational substratum of reason without which reason would have no organs and no points of application.¹⁰⁰

Piety, however, values things in relation to a person and his circumstance, a rational evaluation since "partiality in man's affection and allegiance is justified by the partial nature and the local status of his life." Thus, "piety is the spirit's acknowledgment of its incarnation" and has both a natural basis and a rational function.¹⁰¹

The second and nobler side of religion is spirituality, which by setting an ideal goal of life gives values to piety: "a man is spiritual when he lives in the presence of the ideal, and whether he eat or drink does so for the sake of a true and ultimate good."¹⁰² Spirit adds consciousness without confusing instinct, but, unfortunately, this ideal is rarely achieved in life. Spirituality, although a fundamental type of life, is subject to corruption.¹⁰³ Sophistication is its enemy. A spiritual man should be at home in the world, understanding and using the

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 179.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 184.

¹⁰²Ibid., p. 193.

¹⁰³Ibid., pp. 194-195.

world. Yet as his instincts increase, they become confused and weak.¹⁰⁴ Partial adjustments--but without understanding their own causes, effects, or relations--in the form of passions, prejudices, motives, and animosities arise in the minds and in society. The consequences of the resulting confusion is that man thinks ideality supernatural and almost impossible. Because he is so confused at his awakening, he things chaos was the crigin of the world.¹⁰⁵ But chaos is secondary, arising from the conflicts, and

only when the disordered impulses and perceptions settle down into a trained instinct, a steady, vital response and adequate preparation for the world, do clear ideas and successful purposes arise in the mind. The Life of Reason, with all the arts, then begins its career.¹⁰⁶

The rationality of a spiritual life depends on its ability to demonstrate a rational escape from worldliness, and there is evidence that spirituality can foster a Life of Reason:

Worldliness is arrest and absorption in the instrumentalities of life; but instrumentalities cannot exist without ultimate purposes, and it suffices to lift the eyes to those purposes and to question the will sincerely about its essential preference to institute a catalogue of rational goods, by pursuing any of which we can escape worldliness.¹⁰⁷

Even physical sense is a good and, when refined, physical existence becomes its own reward. Fine arts, science, love, and friendship are rational goods, but these are only episodes in conventional life. Sense, art, knowledge, and sympathy cannot entirely cover and justify man's

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p. 197.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 198.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 199.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., pp. 209-210.

passion, industry, government, and religion.¹⁰⁸ Experience and reason do not give birth to preference but are its offspring. The spiritual man needs a light of ultimate purpose by which to review experience.¹⁰⁹

Even after spiritual men have been freed from worldly distractions, they have another enemy to overcome--one that the very depths of their spirituality have created--the illusion "that they and their chosen interests alone are important or have a legitimate place in the world."¹¹⁰ [In the Christian symbolism of The Realm of Spirit this is the Distraction of the Devil.] Therefore, the relativity of ideals must be realized: a most difficult task, since fanatical insistence outrages instincts and interests, which are the basis of all ideals, in others and ultimately in oneself; conversely, feeling too deeply the rights of all interests may lead to a mystical disintegration and retention of no strong allegiance to any human interest. The solution lies in the highest justice or Charity. The ultimate ideal, which of course must be authoritative to be ideal, must yet take all other interests into consideration and be universally representative of them.¹¹¹ Reason in suppressing any impulse must sympathetically hear that impulse. Justice requires that moral restrictions and compromises be imposed because not all the interests in the soul and in society can be satisfied together, not because of some second-hand morality, which no longer remembers its sources in natural life, has established certain standards.¹¹² Thus when Oliver Alden reaches this stage of Charity in The Last Puritan, then he

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 210.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p. 211.

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 214.

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 215.

¹¹²Ibid., p. 216.

is convinced "on Puritan grounds that it was wrong to be a Puritan." (p. 6)

The Last Puritan is a microcosm of man's moral history, with characters symbolizing varying levels of spirituality men have achieved and the different avenues of religion and philosophy they have traveled to reach a rational life synthesizing "piety, or loyalty to necessary conditions, and spirituality, or devotion to ideal ends."¹¹³ Secondly, it is an allegorical pilgrimage of spirit in the genteel tradition which lingered in the academic philosophy of twentieth century America. Atavistic Oliver Alden, endowed with a spiritual nature but inheriting a culture which did not provide for spiritual expression, can only turn further inward until his spirit reaches a moment of liberation and Charity, and he dies.

¹¹³Ibid., p. 276.

"Unity of conception is an aesthetic merit no less than a logical demand." (Interpretations of Poetry and Religion, p. 164)

CHAPTER III

FORM

Form, in the sense of order or harmony, is the underlying principle of all aspects of George Santayana's philosophy. In his ontological system it is harmony in matter that produces the psyche, which, through a harmonious evolution, gives birth to consciousness; morally, it is by a rational harmonizing of the animal instincts of his psyche and his spirit, by adapting his immortal self to his material body in a particular time and place in the flux of nature, that man achieves a Life of Reason. Similarly, he found beauty of form the most characteristic problem of aesthetics. Something of the importance of form to his personal temperament is his disclosure that he could never see a half-complete circle without wishing to complete it.¹

Not surprisingly, Santayana's literary criticism had frequently dealt with literary form--structure and technique--as philosophically expressive of the beliefs of the author and of the age in which he wrote. This dual relationship between form and content, between artistic structure and the moral and imaginative temper of the age in which it is written, is strongly emphasized in Santayana's study of the Divine

¹Daniel Cory, "Preface," The Life of Reason, or The Phases of Human Progress, by George Santayana. Revised by the author in collaboration with Daniel Cory (One-volume ed., New York, 1953), p. vi.

Comedy, a work which, I believe, might well have been one source of inspiration for both theme and structure of The Last Puritan. In The Realm of Spirit, at least part of which was written concurrently with The Last Puritan and, like the novel, uses the symbols of Christianity to show the torment of spirit, Santayana says that his philosophical study treats fundamentally the same subject in "critical prose" that Dante had written of "in a magnificent biographical and cosmic myth." This lesson of the Divine Comedy, as Santayana interpreted it, is

the morphology of spirit illustrated by great examples, showing that spirit suffers and what it gains by existing. These myriad lives and the myriad judgments did not produce one another; they grew severally out of human nature in various persons and circumstances, yet here are all marshalled, under the form of eternity, into a hierarchy, into a ladder of salvation through which spirit may mount to divine insight and freedom, but on any step of which it may halt, down to the depths of rage and madness.²

The imaginative and logical forms used by Dante had been described by Santayana in Three Philosophical Poets:

The subject matter of the Divine Comedy is accordingly the moral universe in all its levels,---romantic, political, religious. To present these moral facts in a graphic way, the poet performed a double work of imagination. First he chose some historical personages that might plausibly illustrate each condition of the soul. Then he pictured the person in some characteristic and symbolic environment. To give material embedment to moral ideas by such a method would nowadays be very artificial, and perhaps impossible.³

To depict his own conception of "the moral universe in all its levels . . . in a graphic way," Santayana created his own "double work of the imagination" in novel form. Moreover, it would seem that in his

²Santayana, The Realm of Spirit, p. 50.

³George Santayana, The Three Philosophical Poets: Lucretius, Dante, and Goethe (Cambridge, 1927), p. 106. Santayana left little literary analysis dealing directly with the novel, but many remarks about other genres are applicable to creative writing in general.

"fable" he has attempted to fulfill the requirements which he established for the highest form of poetry, standards which he had found only partially or singly fulfilled in the poetry of Lucretius, Dante, and Goethe.

The poet, he says,

should live in the continual presence of all experience, and respect it; he should at the same time understand nature, the ground of that experience; and he should also have a delicate sense for the ideal echoes of his passion, and for all the colors of his possible happiness . . . But this supreme poet is in limbo still.⁴

In his study of the poets, Santayana found in Goethe's poetry "human life in its immediacy, treated romantically." Lucretius had a vision of both nature and human life. Dante surpassed the other two in scope by "spiritual mastery of that life, and a perfect knowledge of good and evil."⁵ The limitation of this last master was that his religious vision was not true.

To meet his own standards for an imaginative work of art, Santayana would have to conceive a vehicle which could convey his vision of truth, congruous in both form and content to the age in which he wrote. Dante, the supernaturalist, places his spirits in another world, each region representing the spiritual level that souls had achieved on earth. Santayana, the naturalist, conceived spirit as the moral consciousness embodied in a living person. Thus while he too paints a moral hierarchy, the degrees of spirituality which his characters achieve are marked by distractions to spirit in their earthly lives. Nor can Dante's Paradise be man's highest objective, since Santayana believed personal immortality is an unwarranted belief and man's biological existence does not permit

⁴Ibid., pp. 214-215.

⁵Ibid., p. 206.

achievement of complete spirituality in his mortal life. An individual's highest goal can only be a life of reason reached through a synthesis of spiritual aspirations, consonant with individual capacities, to the forces of the natural world, which include his own body. Another divergence marks the contrast of Dante's religious supernaturalism and Santayana's naturalistic beliefs. The latter's philosophy has a historical perspective which was impossible for the earlier poet. Through his view of moral history Santayana discerned cultural patterns peculiar to particular religions. Those religions which had retained acknowledgment of man's attachment to his physical sources had produced civilized and rational societies. The Last Puritan incorporates this historical and cultural perspective through characters symbolizing both varying ratios of spirituality and piety and the cultures which had produced those proportions.

Having already utilized poetry, drama, and essays as imaginative mediums for his philosophic beliefs, Santayana chose the novel as genre for his "biographical and cosmic myth," a choice that appears to have been dictated by his thought that prose more nearly suited the temper of the age than did poetry. Many of the ideas embodied in the novel had been introduced earlier in sonnets and in the poetic drama Lucifer. But when asked in later years why he did not write more poetry, Santayana responded "that poetry was not congenial to the spirit of the age."⁷ The scope of his imagined work and his own literary standards created difficulties for Santayana perhaps greater than those encountered by other writers depicting the spiritual pilgrimage of a mortal life. Closed by literary fashion was Bunyan's use of the simple allegorical form. Novels such as Melville's Moby Dick (which he thought overrated) and Conrad's

⁷Kallen, p. 246.

Lord Jim did not embody the explicit cultural criticism that is found in The Last Puritan although criticism is, of course, implied toward a society which has produced characters who are tragically unable to succeed in uniting idealism and reality.

Within genre, the primary formal organization in literature, are other formal values, and Santayana concurred with Aristotle in assigning as the chief element in drama that of plot or synthesis of actions.⁸ With his recognition of plot as the central formal organization, Santayana also assigned a high importance to the creation of character, and it is the latter form which most critics have found more skillfully developed in the novel. Interesting, and perhaps significant if he himself deliberately used the same technique in his novel as a commentary on his age and culture, is Santayana's theory that modern dramatists, including Shakespeare, following the romantic tendency of modern times, have tended to deemphasize plot in favor of ethos and sentiment expressed in elaborate characterization. Such great characters express their individuality through ultracharacteristic actions and speeches, occasionally in soliloquy.⁹ Whether Santayana's style has evolved from a conscious attempt to portray a romantic age's attention to self, or from a lack of experience in writing novels, or both, by taking his definition of spirit as a witness, not a participant, the emphasis on characterization rather than action is a compatible choice to depict a story of spiritual quest. The result is a novel having little action, lacking a tightly knit plot, and yet employing dramatic convention. Thus if we evaluate The Last Puritan

⁸George Santayana, The Sense of Beauty; Being the Outlines of Aesthetic Theory (New York, 1955), p. 171.

⁹Ibid., pp. 172-173.

in comparison with the modern novel which utilizes plot as the basic form of organization, the philosopher's novel may be found wanting. Yet one must conclude that his literary style was made for the most part consciously and deliberately as the style most harmonious with the objectives of the book. The book is, of course, not formless. The "fable" is an allegory of the human spirit and a criticism of American intellectual life. Since the cultural theme is inextricably woven with the spiritual theme, the characters and their relationships have multiple symbolic implications. The general structure of the novel centers about the search for a rational life by the Christ-like figure of Oliver Alden from his birth in the genteel tradition to ultimate Puritanism and death--i. e., his moral consciousness or spirit asserting its domination over and rejection of its natural basis in his physical body in the natural world until the liberated spirit denies its own right to domination and achieves Charity. The other male characters whom Oliver encounters similarly seek their versions of the Life of Reason, representing at once the varying levels of spirituality and the relativity of spirit-matter balance in different individuals and in different cultures. The female characters symbolize the religious and philosophic thought current in their respective societies. Through the mother-son relationships of the characters is shown spirit's attachment or piety toward its natural origins, and the sexual relation is the philosophic or religious medium by which spirit finds expression in its world. The different families indicate the varying directions Protestantism has taken in the countries it has dominated.

The historical antecedents of Oliver's Puritanism are given in the account of his ancestry, the American settlers who "apart from a few southerners were drawn from an extreme party in England." (p. 313)

Oliver himself was a direct descendant of "those famous pilgrims, Priscilla and John Alden," (p. 72) and had been named for the staunch English Puritan soldier, Oliver Cromwell. As the frontier conditions of settling a new country gradually had given way to prosperity, a new materialism enveloped the practical side of life in the new country while intellectual thought lapsed into the genteel tradition. The commercialization of the age is symbolized by wealthy Old Mr. Alden, whose hard and miserly demands had brought about his death at the hands of a moneyless and desperate tenant. To him were born three children. "Poor Julia" suffered the height of spiritual distraction, the insanity common in old New England families. Nathaniel, torn between the forces of commercial interests and his Puritan moral conscience, wore at least an imaginary scarlet letter on his breast and sought solace by physical withdrawal from the world into his shuttered house on Beacon Street. New blood was introduced into the Alden stock with Old Mr. Alden's second marriage to an "almost Southerner," a Lanier from Baltimore. To this union was born Peter, who "even as a small boy . . . had shown carelessness, a defiance, a secret perversity which marked him out for a black sheep," (p. 27) displaying an unpuritanical disregard for punctuality and duty and a sinful interest in physical matters. The death of both parents had left Peter under the guardianship of his half-brother Nathaniel. At the age of eighteen Peter declared his preference for "muckers" who were "more natural than a nice fellow" because a mucker could "have" his best girl without marrying her. To this declaration Nathaniel never uttered a word, left the room, and "in his whole long life he never saw his brother Peter again." (p. 30)

A consultation among Nathaniel, the minister Dr. Hart, the physician Dr. Hand, and the lawyer Dr. Head, resulted in Peter's being sent for the

summer to the Reverend Mark Lowe's Camp for Backward Lads at Slump, Wyoming. If the repentance were complete and his Character retrieved, Peter was to be sent to Exeter in preparation for Harvard. The report on him was so favorable that the promise had to be fulfilled, but to spare himself the pain of seeing Peter's moral disintegration, which he knew was forthcoming, Nathaniel arranged for Peter to make his home with his half-sister Caroline, daughter of the second Mrs. Alden, and no blood relation to the Puritan Aldens. Caroline had long since married a prosperous banker, Erasmus Van de Weyer. Peter bloomed in the atmosphere of Exeter and Harvard and his half-sister's fashionable home, drifting sentimentally and futilely for two years. Then during the initiation rites of a secret society at Harvard, Peter was commanded to steal the college Bible from the chapel. Surprised by the night watchman, Peter "brought the whole weight of the Holy Scriptures upon his adversary's head." (p. 50) The watchman fell against a brass railing and died; Peter, although absolved, was shipped out of the country, beginning his long Ishmael-like wanderings. Coming into his inheritance three months later, Peter used it to escape the constraints of business and society to which conventional rich men were subjected. He wandered through the world, sampling the philosophy and art of the Far and Near East, explored the cradle of our culture in the Mediterranean, studied medicine in Europe--all in vain. Like the mystics described in Reason in Religion, Peter could form no strong allegiance to any one ideal and his life remained ineffectual. Finally he returned to America to get a medical degree at Harvard. Fearing his own abnormalities, Peter sought the advice of the renowned "alienist," Dr. Bumstead of Great Falls, Connecticut, who represents the growing element of psychology in American philosophy.

The Bumstead family provided Oliver's maternal ancestry, for Peter,

his spirit tired to a point of indifference, sought peace in what he knew best---traditional Puritanism---in a marriage with a perfect example of provincial genteelism, Harriet Bumstead. From this marriage was born Oliver, atavistic and ultimate Puritan. On his mother's side, Oliver's uncles are symbols of the escapes Americans had sought when the religious basis of their philosophy was dissolved. Jack Bumstead, editor of the Boston Butterfly and Busy Bee and the New England Roadster, was the American humorist who, although amusingly ironical toward it, still clung to the genteel tradition because he had nothing to replace it, just as the Renaissance intellectuals clung to the formal organization of the church because they had no substitute structure. Harry Bumstead still strived to preserve religion, and it was through him that the second element of the Genteel Tradition, the Transcendental thought prevalent in German philosophy, was introduced into Oliver's life. Harry, a theology student at Gottingen, was attracted to Irma, a German girl, but nothing could come of their attachment, since Harry was already engaged to a not so young librarian at Williams College. Loyalty and honor forbade him to marry Irma, yet a desire to make reparation to her caused him to arrange for her to be sent to America as a governess for young Oliver.

Irma was the daughter of a clergyman, but "Fraulein Schlote, though deeply religious in her feelings, was [far] from forming any abstract notion of religion or seeing God anywhere but in Nature and Society and the conscience of man." (p. 86) Nurtured on readings of Goethe, Irma was a mild, feminine version of the philosophy current in Germany, the evolution of Protestantism which Santayana had indicted so severely in Egotism in German Philosophy. In her the German Will had not attained "the tone of authority, with the expectation of browbeating the world into accepting

it until the Zeitgeist and the path of national consciousness should take another turn," (p. 509) which Oliver later found characteristic of German philosophy proper, and the inspiration for the greed that had brought World War I.

With Irma as tutor, Oliver studied German and English literature, history, and the classics, often surpassing her in the fields of natural science and mathematics. When, to fulfill Mrs. Alden's notion of democracy, Oliver entered Great Falls High School, he was well beyond the scholastic standards of the school. With the same sense of duty with which he did his schoolwork, Oliver entered the athletic program and excelled there as he did in the school room. At Great Falls he encountered another American theory in the person of Cyrus Paul Whittle, a teacher who preached with apostolic fervor the holiness of quantity. Oliver absorbed these theories without notice, since they were "not incongruous with his own temperament." (p. 126)

Shortly after his marriage, Peter escaped the confines of Harriet's gentility by living aboard his yacht and visiting Great Falls only occasionally. An invitation to visit his father's yacht afforded Oliver the opportunity of being introduced to two new perspectives of life alien to the fusion of Calvinism and transcendentalism which formed the provincial genteel tradition he had known. A certain apathy and physical lassitude during the summer preceding his senior year in high school led to Oliver's visit to his father and introduction to two new ways of thought. Jim Darnley, the young English captain of his father's yacht, brought within Oliver's scope the natural man in whom the body dominated the spirit. Jim had only progressed to the stage of worldliness described in The Realm of Spirit as the hunter or sailor fulfilling his bodily needs. Oliver had of course met people in whom physical existence

was pronounced, as the Catholic Denis Murphy, his swimming and rowing teacher, and the boys at the high school, but the influence of their genteel environment had caused them to look up to him instead of attracting him to their way of life.

Oliver found an extreme opposite of Jim's physical nature in the person of his cousin Caleb Wetherbee, an idealist. When Puritanism lost its religious foundations, Caleb had converted to Catholicism, while still retaining his ardent Americanism. He regarded his physical deformity as a blessing by which he could still avoid the outside materialism and prosperity, which he felt would eventually collapse. This eventuality he prepared for by gathering monks from all American nationalities to preserve the true knowledge and pure liturgy of the Catholic faith.

Oliver thought Caleb's faith an unacceptable "superstition." Completely attracted to Jim's youth and outlook, he returned to Great Falls, where, to his mother's horror, he assumed many of Jim's mannerisms. A crisis in Oliver's life was precipitated by another invitation from his father, this time for a six-weeks' cruise. Mrs. Alden, rightly foreseeing that such a trip would be the end of her influence over Oliver, issued an ultimatum that neither Oliver nor his father could return to her home if Oliver went on the trip. Peter forced Oliver into a deeper decision by extending the invitation to a year abroad with a tutor and then college wherever he chose. Duty determined Oliver's decision to stay for his senior year at Great Falls High School and later enrollment at Williams College, but, although his decision was what Mrs. Alden had wished, there was a tacit understanding that his childhood under the influence of his mother and Irma had ended. His spirit had left the Genteel Tradition behind. Fortified in morale by a surreptitious visit with

Jim in New York, Oliver passed his last year in high school dutifully performing academically and athletically whatever he was expected to do.

Summer brought a visit with his father in England. Peter was outwardly at home in England, but the remnants of his Puritan conscience forbade a complete transformation into an Englishman, leaving him a sense of moral solitude. Perceiving that Europe might spoil Oliver for living in his own country, he nonetheless wondered if living in America might not spoil Oliver for living with himself.

Oliver's first weekend in England was spent in Iffley with Jim's family, each of whom represents a degree of spirituality and a direction in which spirit in English Protestantism has progressed. At one time Santayana's "political fancy" believed that in modern England, and in ancient Greece, he "had discovered the ideal in the real;" but more experience and reading convinced him such was not true in either case.¹⁰ Similarly he later concluded that the English character was not as "manly and singular," as "Spartan and archaically Greek," as he had earlier thought. While such character did exist, it was mixed if not overbalanced by worldliness. Otherwise, the English would never have "become Puritan, mercantile, and emigrant."¹¹

Santayana assessed the most dominant characteristic of the Englishman's psyche as "his inner atmosphere, the weather in his soul . . . a mass of dumb instincts and allegiances, the love of a certain quality of life, to be maintained manfully."¹² All his activities and habits are

¹⁰Santayana, "The Idler and His Works," pp. 14-15.

¹¹George Santayana, "The British Hegelians," Soliloquies in England and Later Soliloquies, pp. 202-204.

¹²Santayana, "The British Character," *ibid.*, pp. 30-31.

geared to the inner man and his privacy.¹³ He loves the earth, is intellectually indolent, and shy of speculative thinking.¹⁴ He has worked out the adjustment of his inner man to reality in a series of compromises in religion, philosophy, and political institutions, which are distinguished only in practice.¹⁵ In each the inner man has been master and has steered its direction. The most obvious support for the Englishman's inner man has lain in classical and Anglican traditions, if they were not too clearly defined or too slavishly followed. Thus, most characteristically he was "John Bull, the theologian, instinct with heresy and practising compromise," and rationalist John Bull was very similar.¹⁶ Ironically, this characteristic has trapped the Englishman in a British philosophy that is unEnglish.¹⁷ According to Santayana, "the British empiricists . . . in the beginning, like every unsophisticated mortal" thought naturalistically. However, two forces had changed the direction of their philosophy. Even before the Reformation the British suspicion of the mind and reason had caused him to turn to experience or knowledge gained by direct contact with things as the basis for truth. Yet the obvious conclusion of materialism was bypassed by a peculiarity of the British temperament--a fondness for musing and withdrawing into the inner man. Empiricism became introspective and experience became "a set of pathological facts, the passive subject matter of psychology," a form of idealism:

¹³Santayana, "Privacy," *ibid.*, p. 36.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

¹⁵Santayana, "Distinction in Englishmen," *ibid.*, p. 54.

¹⁶Santayana, "John Bull and His Philosophers," *ibid.*, pp. 190-191.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 193.

The irony of logic actually made British empiricism understand in this psychological way, the starting point for transcendentalism and for German philosophy.¹⁸

In turn, the British mind, disliking to be too articulate, has at times accepted a foreign doctrine, not understanding its native quality, as a symbol, however inappropriate, for its own feelings.¹⁹

In religion, Santayana interpreted the English church as the Englishman's compromise between his Christian heritage and the demands of his inner man, holding "that nothing can be obligatory for a Christian which is unpalatable to an Englishman." Thus while his theology is fundamentally Catholic, the Englishman has held to the Protestant authority of the inner conscience.²⁰ Describing the decline of Protestantism to skepticism, Santayana insisted that any intermediate position between "ancient revelation and private experience" could only be temporary. One must accept the bottom of skepticism or attempt to climb again to the top of supernaturalism, as exhibited in the Anglican Church.²¹ He did propose a course by which the English church might become catholic in another sense--by continuing a process by which Christianity was born and developed: the casting off of doctrine and the substitution of the satisfactions of the inner man:

The reduction of revelation, by the higher criticism of the Bible, to its true place in human history, will involve a new change of front; and the absorption of modern science and of democracy would complete the transformation.²²

¹⁸George Santayana, Character and Opinion in the United States (Garden City, n. d.), pp. 16-17. Character and Opinion in the United States was originally published in 1920.

¹⁹Santayana, "John Bull and His Philosophers," p. 190.

²⁰Santayana, "The English Church," p. 87.

²¹Santayana, Reason in Religion, p. 121.

²²Santayana, "The English Church," p. 87.

He thought that although one group of the English church might welcome such a destiny, another party had already turned to the past seeking medieval piety and practices.²³

In The Last Puritan Jim's father was a spiritual man, a Christian Platonist who, with true English temperament, reconciled his existence in a material world through the make-believe convention of the Church of England. His theory, not understood by his simpler parishioners and not compatible with Oliver's puritanical upbringing which rejected all sham, was at least partially Santayana's own--that of religion not as a literal fact but as a poetic symbol for man's aspiration for good:

Christianity was partly poetry and partly delusion. The Roman church clings to both parts equally; Protestantism has kept the delusion and destroyed the poetry; and only the Anglican tradition is capable of preserving the poetry while sweeping delusion away. (p. 474)

Yet unlike Santayana, whose naturalistic philosophy needed no fictive support, the Vicar had found no satisfactory substitute for religious dogma. Just as Americans had clung to the remnants of Calvinism, the Vicar clung to his religion although it had ceased to be "a radical conversion" and was only "a local heritage, a public passion, a last illusion for the spirit to shed." (p. 255) He retained vestiges of naturalism in his appearance, in tending his own garden, and in his feeling of responsibility for his natural son. In this respect he is similar to Peter Alden, whose relationship with Jim reinforced his ties to the physical world. When Peter thought Jim might refuse to serve his interests, he took an overdose of drugs and escaped the natural world. The Vicar, seeing Jim's death as a release, repeated "Nunc dimittis" and "Consummatum est" and starved himself to death.

²³Ibid., p. 88.

Jim Darnley was the physical man, the least spiritual of the male characters in the novel. As an example of a "bodily life," however, he displayed a certain charm and stature in "exercising his natural gifts." (p. 254) Santayana personally had found the English psyche attractive because of the primacy of the physical and moral nature over the intellectual. Although in Jim, the physical had ascendancy over both the moral and intellectual, there are in him traits of British manliness and conventional compromise that enable him to live well in a world which he does not completely understand and does not try to transcend. Like the true Englishman he was, he carried his household gods in the form of family pictures and personal mementos with him. He visited theaters and listened to church choirs with equal ease, feeling "a sense of reunion with the moral bulwarks of England." (p. 133)

Mrs. Darnley, with whom Jim had the closest relationship and understanding, was a peasant-like woman, even closer to her animal origin than was her son. Creature comforts to her were "ultimate realities," (p. 535) and morality consisted of "cheating the hangman and getting your pint of beer." (p. 64) Santayana's deft and humorous touch with Mrs. Darnley's characterization and dialect has been commended and was a point of satisfaction for him. The best possible description of her philosophy comes in her own words, showing her tenacious, instinctive, animal grip on life:

This is a wretched world, Mr. Oliver, a wretched world; and the worst of it is, that nobody can live in it forever. (p. 535)

The fourth member of the English Darnley family is Jim's young sister Rose. Henry Seidel Canby humorously compared Rose to an examination question in one of Santayana's Harvard courses:

Now what, he asks his readers, do you suppose this young woman for whom I have written a poem and put in the midst of my prose--what do you suppose she means?²⁴

Rose, I believe, represents the prevailing British philosophy with its dominant note of psychology, just as Maud is her counterpart in American philosophy. According to Santayana, psychologism had its beginnings in British philosophy, prior to the Reformation, in the British distrust of the mind. In turning to experience as the judge of the nature of things, the British national temperament turned experience from what would seem its logical direction of materialism into an introspective form. The Englishman's interest turned from what the experience was to how he experienced it and ended in "the passive subject matter of psychology" and a form of idealism that initiated transcendentalism and German subjective philosophy. British and American philosophy have struggled with the meaning of experience since then, "meaning sometimes contact with things and at other times absolute feeling without courage or self-knowledge."²⁵

In general, Santayana assessed psychological views as

that feelings or ideas were absolute atoms of existence, without any ground or source, so that the elements of their universe were all mental; but they conceived these psychical elements to be deployed in physical time and even (since there were so many simultaneous senses of them) in some sort of space. These philosophers were accordingly idealists about the substance but naturalists about the order and relations of existences . . .²⁶

Rose, like the other allegorical characters in the book, tends to be an extreme or "ultimate" type. According to Santayana's analysis, the

²⁴Canby, p. 4.

²⁵Santayana, Character and Opinion in the United States, p. 17.

²⁶Ibid., p. 18.

psychological critic, if he is true to his method, ultimately "must discard the notion of consciousness." Ideas

do not lie in the mind (for there is no mind to be found) but in the medium that observably surrounds them . . . The so-called appearances, according to a perfected criticism of knowledge, are nothing private or internal, they are merely these portions of external objects which from time to time impress themselves on somebody's organ of sense and are responded to by his nervous system.²⁷

Although using this as a description of the American realist in whom idealism has worked itself into the opposite doctrine that consciousness does not exist, it is an excellent description of Rose. Prophetically her photograph, before Oliver met her, showed "Jim's features very much purified." (p. 208) Rose was not religious and, while fond of her father, believed not a word he said. Reason in her was dispelled:

Her young mind was categorical. When it came to argument or generalities it stopped short. She didn't look for reasons or believe in them. Things simply were like that. If other people reasoned, she didn't mind. That was one of the dull facts that required no explanation and admitted none. She found she got on just as well without reasoning. (p. 280)

Perhaps the best suggestion to Rose's psychological symbolism is her denial of moral consciousness. Although she recognized the moral superiority of her father and Oliver over that of her mother and Jim, she herself was neither good or bad: "I'm nothing." (p. 292) Significantly Maud repeated on two occasions, "I don't count." (pp. 467-468) On Oliver's first meeting with Maud he mentally compared her with Rose.

Three important results emerged from Oliver's first weekend at If-fley. Learning of Jim's almost complete animality--his illicit affair with Mrs. Bowler and their illegitimate child and the added suspicion that Jim had murdered Mr. Bowler as well as his mate on the yacht--

²⁷Ibid., p. 93.

Oliver's attraction toward Jim and toward a completely physical way of life waned. He then turned toward the Vicar whom he respected "morally and intellectually" more than anyone else. The third event was his mock engagement to Rose, an idea which Oliver held in reserve to almost the end of his life.

Also on his first trip to England Oliver met Mario or Vanny, representing another philosophy, and again he was attracted by a way of life through which he thought his spirit might be reconciled to the world. To entertain Oliver, Peter took his son to visit Eton, where Mario Van de Weyer was a student. The friendship between the two cousins developed rapidly, and Oliver looked forward to being Mario's benefactor both morally and monetarily in America. Mario, or Vanny as he was known to his English friends, was the son of the deceased Harold Van de Weyer and of an Italian opera singer, and was the grandson of Peter's stepsister Carolyn. His father had been one of the sensitive young men, who, unable to channel his artistic talents, had fled to Europe, there to change futilely from one endeavor to another, and then die young. From his maternal side, Mario inherited the Catholic tradition.

Interpretation of Mario's characterization has presented problems, perhaps due to literary faults as well as to some ambivalence in Santayana's own sentiments or, more justly, to the ambivalent nature of man's existence as both an animal and a spiritual creature. Eliseo Vivas cites The Last Puritan as a dramatic union of the "disparate forces" which Santayana had been unable to synthesize logically in The Life of Reason with Mario as Santayana's latest ideal.²⁸ John Yolton dissents from this theory, asserting that Mario is Santayana's ideal only in that "for

²⁸Vivas, p. 349.

those who have Mario's outlook regarding matter will the future be rewarding," since spirit in Mario is lacking.²⁹ Irving Singer also views Mario as "lacking in spiritual sensitivity;" but because he interprets Santayana as a moral relativist whose standards for "the good life for some particular person is that life which harmonizes his various interests and passions in accordance with his 'real nature,'" Mario still represents the "jubilant life of reason."³⁰ In identifying Mario with the Latin-Catholic culture, James Ballowe thinks that Mario displays stability in "a modernism that carried with it the lessons of the past."³¹

Interpreting Mario requires another dimension--that of viewing him as the other characters are viewed, in the dilemma of a Christian who has lost belief in the supernatural foundations of his religion and is forced to construct a rational philosophy without its support--an evolution of a particular religious and philosophic thought, i. e., modern Catholicism. Santayana described modern history--shaped by the three forces of the Renaissance, the Reformation and the Revolution--as

a many-sided insurrection of the unregenerate natural man, with all his physical powers and affinities, against the regimen of Christendom. . . . Society has gradually become a rather glorified, if troubled, organisation of matter, and of man for material achievements.³²

Santayana acknowledged that these "prevalent winds of doctrine" had penetrated even the Catholic Church. Nor was compromise with prevailing

²⁹Yolton, p. 235.

³⁰Singer, p. 367.

³¹Ballowe, p. 194.

³²George Santayana, The Genteel Tradition at Bay (New York, 1931), pp. 17-18.

thought new, since the Church in the past had maintained such inconsistencies as

the morality of chivalry and war, the ideals of foppishness and honour, . . . side by side with the maxims of the gospel, which they entirely contradict.³³

The Renaissance had been an attempt of the natural man to retain the Church while restoring pagan standards. The intrusion of liberalism into the bastions of the Church in Santayana's time was through modernism:

the infiltration into minds that begin by being Catholic and wish to remain so of two contemporary influences: one the rationalistic study of the Bible and of church history, the other modern philosophy, especially in its mystical and idealistic forms.³⁴

The modernists, by asserting the authority of the individual and a lay philosophy, were in principle Protestants.³⁵ Although the motives of modernism were admirable, Santayana saw in them an unintentional but inevitable undermining of the Church by acceptance of its dogma symbolically instead of as a literal fact upon which the Church was founded: "In a frank supernaturalism, in a tight clericalism, not in a pleasant secularisation lies the sole hope of the church."³⁶

Mario, like the other characters, represents the fruition of his heritage. As inheritor of the Catholic tradition which had fostered spiritual expression through external experience, he more nearly approaches a rational synthesis of spirit and piety than has been achieved in Protestant cultures although he is far from being the "ideal" which

³³George Santayana, "Modernism and Christianity," Winds of Doctrine, p. 25.

³⁴Ibid., p. 40.

³⁵Ibid., p. 46.

³⁶Ibid., p. 56.

Santayana had defined in The Life of Reason. Like Oliver and Jim, he is a product of a culture which has not been altogether successful in reconciling the forces which have dominated modern history with his spiritual heritage. As the American genteel tradition and the English church had evidenced, a religion and the morality it propounds are vital only when they are supported by an acknowledged supernaturalism on which they were founded. There is no half-way point on the descent into skepticism. In The Last Puritan modernism in the Catholic tradition is symbolized through Mario's attitudes toward war and chivalry and his re-entry into the church. Like his originator, young Mario had lost his faith and was not a practicing Catholic although he thought it the only church for the believer. However, unlike Santayana, Mario reentered the Church. His "evolution was natural." (p. 599) After a youthful ambition to be a Knight of Malta, he turned from chivalry to religion, persuaded by new friends "that a beautiful, jolly Christendom can be re-created, simply by force of description and of a false eloquence." (p. 582) Mario is the Catholic modernist. However, Mario's virtue on which Santayana as narrator gave approval in the Epilogue is that while his "conditional" faith has taken the route to complete skepticism and undermining of his church, he is nonetheless equipped with a religious heritage upon which he can build a philosophy rationally balancing mind and matter.

Two aspects of Mario's characterization are misleading. He is not an "ultimate" type, perhaps symbolically so because modernism and skepticism had not made inroads into the Catholic culture to the extent that they had in Protestantism. Compared to Jim's extreme animality and Oliver's overly developed spirituality, Mario may thus seem to be intended as Santayana's ideal, which he is in only a limited sense. The

second area involves a structural flaw. Although comparison with the more spiritual Oliver and his own admission that he is "frankly animal" may make him seem so, Mario is not devoid of spirituality. Certain symbolic characteristics of merriment, self-forgetfulness, and intelligence indicate that he is not entirely lacking in spiritual qualities although spirit in him does not seek to dominate. However, emphasis on Mario's sexual interests, which symbolize piety toward his physical sources, tend to make the reader overlook the less apparent symbols of spirit, and Mario appears, in Vivas's term, a "cad."

Oliver's first encounter with Mario terminated with Mario's return to visit his mother. At the end of the summer Peter Alden, ill and wearied by the thought of Harriet's impending descent upon them to take Oliver back to America, of Jim's possible thought of killing him for the yacht, and of Oliver's inability to shake off his Puritan shackles, escaped physical reality completely through death.

Oliver's next two years were spent at Williams College. Meantime, Mario had come to America, where he was as much at home in the world as he had been in England and France. Through him Oliver was introduced to the other predominant force in American life--big business. In the Harvard infirmary with a broken leg suffered in the Harvard-Williams football game, Oliver was visited by Mario and their fashionable cousin, Edith Van de Weyer, granddaughter of Caroline. In these two, Oliver's spirit once more felt it had found a homecoming.

Oliver entered Harvard to study philosophy and with the futile hope of influencing Mario's life. With Mario's expulsion from school and return to Europe to visit his dying mother, Oliver sought out Edith in the Van de Weyer home in New York and here met the other members of this side of his ancestry. His first reaction was that "in this family, it was

the women who were nice. It was they who understood and sympathised with his feelings," (p. 453) carrying out Santayana's division of masculine business and feminine intellectual interests. James Van de Weyer, eldest son and successful Wall Street banker, typically depended on the women in the family to make Oliver feel at home. His moral philosophy rested on good taste, and good taste meant what was being done on Wall Street. He thought Oliver's friendship with the disappointing Mario was redeemed by Oliver's wealth.

Carolyn, the matriarch of the family, was the old society being supplanted by the machinery of modern living, which she thought was "destroying all the dignity of life." (p. 456) Carolyn rejected the false comfort of religion. Her philosophy was that one's solace lay in understanding the tragedy of life and enjoying the few honest pleasures that life permitted. Oliver's spirit was attracted to her, as it had been to new experiences in the past, and he felt a sense of belonging. But Carolyn's philosophy rejected the hero as Oliver's ultimate Puritanism doomed him to be.

Feeling an immediate affinity toward the family, Oliver chose Edith as the "right" person to marry:

She would regulate all his social duties, and he would be free in his mind to think, to study, to take the right side intelligently in all higher matters. How ideal that life of theirs would be! (p. 459)

Edith was ostentatiously religious. Like other characters she has her forebears in Santayana's Reason in Religion, linked by the symbolism of social life and fashionable dress and her quasi-medieval jewels. During the Middle Ages a new influence had prevailed in Northern Christianity, as the Germanic races diverged more and more from Latin Catholicism:

It consisted now of imitation, now of revulsion and fanciful originality; never was a race so much under the sway to fashion. Fashion is something barbarous, for it produces

innovation without reason and imitation without benefit. It marks very clearly that margin of irresponsible variation in manners and thought which among a people artificially civilised may so easily be larger than the solid core. It is characteristic of occidental society in medieval and modern times because this society is led by people who, being educated in a foreign culture, remain barbarous at heart. . . . Some educated persons accordingly are merely students and imbibers; they sit at the feet of a past which, not really being theirs, can produce no fruit in them but sentimentality. Others are merely protestants; they are active in the moral sphere only by virtue of an inward rebellion against something greater and overshadowing, yet repulsive and alien. They are conscious truants from a foreign school of life.³⁷

Religion in Edith was imitative and produced only sentimentality. While her church was Anglican and retained many Catholic rituals, the American version seemed closer to the Vicar's definition of Protestantism than to his own Anglican tradition: Edith's church had retained the delusion and destroyed the poetry by substituting a garish imitation of tradition.

Maud was the second Van de Weyer daughter and represented the contemporary American philosophy. Pragmatic Maud was the one who kept the house going. She laughed at her sister's religion but with the rest of the family spared Edith's delusion and helped her retain her faith even in the profligate Mario. Her grandmother had seen the possibility of Maud's marriage to Oliver, and Maud too had been inwardly hopeful of Oliver as she had of Mario, although outwardly concealing her feelings. Maud became betrothed to Senator Lunt. Santayana's respect for the Western American was revealed in his autobiography and much earlier in an address on the Genteel Tradition delivered at the University of California in Berkeley. He found the Western man a man of action, and Senator Lunt was such a man. Of Southern origin, he had escaped the

³⁷Santayana, Reason in Religion, pp. 113-114.

crippling influence of Puritanism. He owned the largest cattle ranch in the world and represented Montana in the United States Congress. Senator Lunt's philosophy, like that of many others in the novel, was derived intact from a past era. The foundation of his belief was Homer: "genuine men in the genuine world," (p. 485) skipping Christianity completely. Once again Oliver's questing spirit was attracted to a way of life which could accept the reality of nature without self-deception but recognized that such a philosophy was impossible for spiritual men like his father and himself.

Members of the Van de Weyer are the last major characters and thus the last influences which are introduced into Oliver's life. Having finished his study at Harvard, emancipated from his mother, disillusioned by Jim, rejected by Edith, Oliver entered "The Last Pilgrimage." A trip around the world with Mario only confirmed Oliver's growing alienation from the world and Mario's delight in it. Oliver's next sojourn was in Germany to study philosophy. Finding no answer in either the Wissenschaft or in a philosophy which explained away the natural world, he turned to England to try to escape all illusions, "to look at things . . . under the form of eternity" (pp. 511-512) before returning to America to get down to business. Oxford afforded him a quiet place to study and proximity to Iffley. He found Jim was no longer stimulated by the world and had retreated more and more into his own self-interest, and even the Vicar offered "a double or ambiguous philosophy" (p. 520) which Oliver's integrity could not stomach.

War broke out during Oliver's stay at Oxford. The reactions of Mario and Oliver contrasted their natures. Mario saw it as he saw love-making, childbirth, and death--"in the nature of things"--not exactly what any decent person would have chosen but there and there to live

with and master chivalrously. His belief was that "if you're a man you must be ready to fight every other man and to make love to every pretty woman." (p. 526) The war would topple governments and bring natural leaders to the fore and give the poor natural man a chance to breathe again. Mario did not seek the war as a chance to restore the past but as an opportunity to build a different world, a natural world not rejected by consciousness and Will. In this passage Santayana refers to the third distraction of the spirit, the distraction which is internal to spirit, the need of spirit to dominate, the characteristic of Nordic religion and philosophy. Mario explained to Oliver:

Because--and this is the first principle of everything which you don't understand--because they /things/ might be, and naturally would be, perfect and sweet and pure; they might be, that is, if ever since the Garden of Eden a horrible worm of a dragon hadn't been crawling all over the earth. At this moment your firebreathing venomous Germany is the mouth of the monster, but his claws are stuck deep into England, his slaver is drooling over the United States, and as for France, poor thing, she was swallowed whole by the beast at the Revolution, and had become, officially nothing but the red cockscorn bobbing on its ugly head. The Devil, the Tempter, the Father of Lies. (p. 526)

Oliver, unable to find a justification for the war to satisfy his moral demands, became more and more incapable of making a decision. Jim went down with his ship. The strain of war and his own inaction became intolerable for Oliver, and he went to France to drive an ambulance, but his health became poor. He returned to Iffley to establish a convalescent home for Canadian soldiers. When America entered the war, it became his duty to return home and enlist. Here the required rigorous physical training dulled his inner mind "and the insolubility of all ultimate problems ceased to be agonising." (p. 541)

Mario characteristically chose and was chosen for the most glamorous jobs in war. When a wound ended his career as a pilot, he became a

liaison officer with much distinction, his debonair success a foil for Oliver's drab failure. Oliver's military life was marked by physical and emotional deterioration. His encounter with a prostitute while on a rest leave in Paris was the basis for his decision to marry Rose. A trip to Iffley proved this course, long held in reserve, was closed to him. Jim and the Vicar were dead, and Rose rightly saw that marriage crossed Oliver's natural vocation of spiritual man. Oliver, strangely liberated by her refusal, characteristically made the proper financial arrangements, settled his mind about the proper perspective of each person to whom he had been attracted, and finally understood and accepted himself for what he was--a Puritan, like Nathaniel, who must live by his own conscience or not at all. Oliver was, however, the Last Puritan and went beyond Nathaniel's puritanism to question his own conscience as arbiter for the world:

To please my own mind, shall I decide what ought to be the world's business? Shall I get up an imaginary programme, and say, like Cousin Caleb Wetherbee, that the world's real business is something that the world neglects and has never heard of, something miraculously revealed only to me or to the sect I happen to belong to? Isn't that like the Pharisee hugging his own melancholy madness and calling all merry people mad? Theirs is the less painfully maintained, artificial folly: the humble, browsing, sleepy, miscellaneous madness of the world. If I tried to do better, I might do worse. Enough if on occasion I practice charity and keep myself as much as possible from complicity in wrong. (pp. 582-583)

Oliver's spiritual pilgrimage ended in Charity, or a sympathetic and just hearing for all claims on the spirit. His physical pilgrimage ended in accidental death a few days after the Armistice. Significantly, Tom Piper, a young army doctor who had revered Oliver throughout their high school and college life, cared and mourned for him.

No character in The Last Puritan fulfills Santayana's defined ideal because no existent culture had produced a rational morality based on

naturalistic beliefs. Mario was the most rational balance of spirit and matter, but in the end he too found religious dogma a necessary support. Furthermore, Mario cannot be considered to represent a solution to reconciliation of spirit and matter in American culture although he has the potential for a Life of Reason. Santayana emphasized in his characterization that as half-American and half-Italian (living in Paris) Mario has the mechanical aptitude to provide materialistic comforts of a good life and a religious heritage to allow spiritual expression. In addition, an English education insured the social amenities, grace, and manliness which steered the middle course between Latin emotionalism and Puritan suppression of emotion. Mario represents the what-might-have-been of Western civilization. But, as is clearly pointed out, America could never accept Mario as he was. Catholicism in an American mold grotesquely emerges in the deformity of a Caleb Wetherbee.³⁸ Although Edith was enamoured of Mario, it was in the hopes of being his Beatrice and changing him, but Oliver knew that the difference between Edith's and Mario's religions was "total and complete" and that Mario would never change. (p. 474) American men like James Van de Weyer and Remington and his group at Harvard could never accept Mario. Moreover, Santayana's philosophy for a rational life called for no one formula for living. He propagated no one life as absolute and right for all men. Instead, he desired

³⁸In Character and Opinion in The United States (pp. 29-30) Santayana describes the quick and easy assimilation of the Catholic into the American way of life, which, in reality, contradicts the very essence of his religion.

individuals, and races, and nations to be themselves, and to multiply the forms of perfection and happiness as nature prompts it.³⁹

Yet such perfection must come through harmony, and it was in the cultures of the Roman Catholic tradition that he found harmony of spirit and matter.

If Santayana presents no ideal of reason in The Last Puritan, he does present a potential American ideal in the person of Tom Piper. Santayana's suggestion for America's salvation was a morality based on frank naturalism. A vigorous re-emergence of the fading genteel tradition in the form of the neo-humanism movement occasioned Santayana's last attack on the Puritan ethic before publication of The Last Puritan. Unlike the Humanists of the Renaissance, the neo-humanists were revolting against the natural man.⁴⁰ Santayana advised that restoration of the moral absolutism demanded by the neo-humanists could be accomplished only through a return to the supernaturalism of its origin.⁴¹

His own moral philosophy rejected religious illusion in favor of a natural foundation:

. . . I think that it is only when he can see the natural origin and limits of the moral sphere that a moralist can be morally sane and just.⁴²

The establishment of a natural base for morality leads to the elimination of absolutism. The individual man is "the only natural unit in morals,"⁴³

³⁹George Santayana, "On My Friendly Critics," Soliloquies in England and Later Soliloquies, p. 258.

⁴⁰Santayana, The Genteel Tradition at Bay, p. 7.

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 40-41.

⁴²Ibid., p. 51.

⁴³Ibid., p. 54.

thus allowing all varieties of perfection.⁴⁴ Through reason "the naturalist may attain, without subterfuge, all the spiritual insights which supernaturalism goes so far out of the way to inspire."⁴⁵

A solution to the American dilemma is suggested in the novel in a minor undeveloped character, perhaps purposely undeveloped as a symbol for a naturalistic philosophy not yet accepted. Tim Piper, son of an apothecary, idolized Oliver during their high school days. Financial circumstances (democracy would not allow even Mrs. Alden to acknowledge classes in society) had sent them on different paths--Tom to the study of medicine and Oliver to the pursuit of spiritual peace--but Tom's devotion continued. His last visit to Oliver convinced him that circumstances would prevent his coming again to High Bluff except to the asylum or cemetery and that it was just as well, since Oliver was patently unhappy. Tom resolved:

Better to give it all up. Better to spend your life going from house to house dosing people with aspirin--the best thing a doctor could do--until you took your last dose of aspirin yourself. (p. 407)

Although Tom's words are defeatist and pessimistic, Santayana's own hope for America lay in its learning to find an ideal in the scientific and material way of life in which it excelled, rather than retreating to the past of the genteel tradition or by imitating the religious fictions and philosophies of alien cultures. Quite specifically he wrote to Logan Pearsall Smith in 1921 of an emerging America:

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 57.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 64.

It is material life (of course with the hygiene, morality, and international good order that can minister to material life) that America has and wants to have and may bring to perfection. There is your doctor in Baltimore who is a great expert, and really knows how to do things: and you will find that, in the service of material life, all the arts and sciences are prosperous in America. . . . It does not seem to me that we can impose on America the task of imitating Europe. The more different it can be, the better; and we must let it take its own course, going a long way round, perhaps, before it can shake off the last trammels of alien tradition and learn to express itself simply, and not apologetically, after its own heart.⁴⁶

At the end of the novel Tom mourned Oliver's death and preserved his memory in a photograph, leaving the question of whether America would turn to a livable natural philosophy or continue to cling to a preserved relic of the past.

For a literary form to convey this history of spirit and culture, Santayana employed a structure and symbolism suggestive of history's perfect example of spirit, the life of Christ. Although discrediting the literal validity of the Christian religion, he made frequent use of the Christian story as a symbol for his own theory of man's spiritual pilgrimage. The concluding chapter of The Realm of Spirit draws an analogy between his ontological system and the Trinity: God-Matter, Logos-Form, and the Holy Ghost-Spirit. The Life of Christ in the Gospels is a moving interpretation of Christ as the only perfect manifestation of spiritual man, nonetheless condemned by the world to death on the cross. The temptations of Christ in the form of the Flesh, the World, and the Devil are the distractions that beset spirit in his philosophy. Not surprisingly, the life of Christ is the symbolic structure for The Last Puritan, Oliver's life loosely paralleling the events in Christ's life

⁴⁶Santayana, The Letters of George Santayana, pp. 193-194.

and his spiritual distractions those of Christ's temptations.

In reminding the reader of Oliver's divine vocation as a spiritual man, Santayana cited in the preface to the novel three instances in which Oliver was overtly compared to Christ.⁴⁷ Irma in a letter to her sister describes "a psychic experience," (p. 223) a wide-awake vision of Oliver as the crucified Christ. Confronted with the offer of going abroad with his father against his mother's warning that it meant leaving his home permanently, Oliver, after an agonizing night of decision, determined to reject Peter's invitation and was sleeping. Peeping into the darkened room, Irma saw what she thought was a distinct picture of the crucified Christ hanging on the wall. A closer examination showed that it was only Oliver's gaunt form stretched on the bed with his hands, scarred from rowing, resting on the metal headpiece, all reflected in a mirror on the opposite wall. But a rational explanation did not destroy the mystical reality of the vision to Irma, who foresaw that Oliver too would face his own Golgotha by sacrificing futilely his spiritual nature to the demands of life in America.

Caleb Wetherbee, who saw Oliver as a "second Messiah," (p. 355) recognized young Oliver's spiritual potential. By sixteen Oliver had penetrated the Prologue and the Himmelfahrt of Faust to understand that Goethe's philosophy was not renunciation but world worship. Caleb compared him to the twelve-year old Christ disputing with the doctors.

The third comparison is the Vicar's warning to Oliver that he is a spiritual man by nature and his admonition that no one can unite all the virtues of body, world, and spirit. Even Christ "could not be a soldier, nor an athlete, nor a lover of women, nor a husband, nor a father." (p.

⁴⁷Santayana, "The Last Puritan Preface," p. 252.

254) Oliver's sacrifices should be made wisely.

Besides these overt comparisons there are many less notable Christ images and parallels. The length of Oliver's life approximated that of Christ's. His early years were spent in the obscurity of his home, where he was tutored. On his first trip away from Great Falls, Caleb recognized his ability to dispute with the doctors. His three-year stay at Williams College was a period of conscious "maturation, of quiet routine, of patient study," (p. 374) suggestive of Christ's sojourn in the wilderness in preparation for his ministry. But, as Santayana wrote of his own comparison between Christian theology and his philosophical system projected in The Realm of Being, the analogy must not be pressed too far.⁴⁸

A few other examples, some general and others more concrete, will suffice. Oliver lived a life of sorrows and no one, except perhaps the Vicar, understood his burden and no one could assume it for him. He was charitable, and his love transcended normal human faults to assume responsibility for his friends. His care for Bobby, both in bandaging his leg and in aiding him financially, suggest Christ-like compassion for children. Christ had answered his mother's claim on him by saying his disciples were his mother and his brethren. Irma recognized a similar renunciation in Oliver toward Mrs. Alden when he answered Peter's invitation to sail abroad the Black Swan. Peter, having found no meaning for his life in all his wandering, had hoped Oliver would be the "Morning star" to guide him.

Two other parallels must be mentioned, instances in which the comparison seems to be made expressly for the purpose of showing that

⁴⁸Santayana, The Realm of Spirit, p. 299.

Oliver as man could never "like Christ attain to a perfect equilibrium of his two natures."⁴⁹ In a felicitous passage in Reason in Religion, Santayana describes the beauty and regenerative power of Christ's forgiveness of the Magdalene by His understanding of the "bright good" of loving too much which led her into sin.⁵⁰ When the Baronne, a Paris prostitute, begged Oliver for money, her real distress moved him as no other woman had ever done. Interpreting his emotion as desire, the Baronne kissed Oliver sensuously, but a Friday meal of sardines and cucumbers lingered overpoweringly on her breath. Oliver's aversion to physical stimuli changed awakening emotion to disgust, which also was replaced instantaneously by a new illumination:

As the Baronne no longer tempted him so she no longer annoyed him. He was simply sorry for her, as for the infinite miseries of mankind; not with the tremulous sympathy that perhaps had only disguised lust, but with a calm, just, deliberate charity, understanding all things, forgiving all things, and willingly draining the cup of truth to the dregs, as it were in atonement for the blind sin of existence. A bottomless sadness, a bottomless peace seemed to possess him. (pp. 556-557)

But Oliver's charity was not sufficient to redeem the world (just as Santayana believed that Christ's had not) or even the Baronne, who found him too serious and questioned, "Is he in his senses?"⁵¹ The human inability to sustain perfect spirituality through charity is also pointed

⁴⁹George Santayana, The Idea of Christ in the Gospels or God in Man: A Critical Essay (New York, 1946), p. 212.

⁵⁰Santayana, Reason in Religion, p. 223.

⁵¹The use of the word "senses" displays Santayana's fondness of a play on words. Particularly amusing is his Dickens-like use of proper names. Great Falls was Mrs. Alden's home town. Dr. Hart, Dr. Head, and Dr. Hand were the minister, the lawyer, and the physician, respectively. Incidentally, a combination of the latter three might have resulted in an American Life of Reason, a fact that the designing Santayana must have chuckled over. Other puns are found throughout the book.

out in the Baronne incident. The illumination slowly faded:

He retained that insight as a sort of point of reference and high water mark in the receding past; he knew that he had understood himself for a moment, and seen in prophecy the path that he was destined to tread. But the concrete vision was gone. His organism was too ponderous, his little duties and habits too distracting, for him to live steadily in the light. (p. 559)

The final parallel is another "reverse" Christ image. Oliver's death came futilely several days after the armistice. A rider on a motor-bicycle, thinking all danger past, came around a curve on the wrong side of the road. Oliver sacrificially tried to avoid a collision and ran into a milestone. The crucified Christ had no broken bones, but water and blood flowed from his wounds. Oliver's death came from a broken neck, but there were "no external injuries, hardly a bruise," (p. 585) His body was to be removed from its remote and quiet tomb and returned to America. The only legacy Oliver left the world was material.

The primary structure of the novel lies not so much, however, in the parallel of Christ-like incidents in Oliver's life as in the pattern of distractions to his spirit corresponding to Satan's three temptations of Christ--satisfactions of the demands of the Flesh, domination over the World, and spiritual omnipotence, or the temptation of the Devil; for it is by the degree of attraction or the attitude shown toward these temptations that spirituality and reason are measured in the major characters of the novel. Basically, the distractions are devices by which the main characters are made symbols of spiritual development of races and cultures. The temptations or distractions also serve another structural purpose. According to Daniel Cory, Santayana confided that one literary difficulty in writing the novel was that of showing Oliver's maturation in the various parts of the novel while still retaining the same characteristics, since he believed that character did not change. The same

problem existed for Mario.⁵² The distractions, I believe, serve as the stabilizing ideas by which he shows that the basic character of each individual did not change even though a period of time elapsed and, in the cases of Mario and Oliver, childhood passed into manhood.

These spiritual distractions which were introduced in Reason in Religion were translated in The Realm of Spirit into Christian symbols.⁵³ Santayana defines distraction as "the alien force that drags the spirit away from the spontaneous exercise of its liberty, and holds it down to the rack of care, doubt, pain, hatred, and vice."⁵⁴ Distraction, which may defy or seduce spirit, arises when there is a lack of harmony in the psyche. Even the fundamental functions of the Flesh, which include the processes of nutrition and reproduction, may bring spiritual distraction. The will to live is a primary ideal, and nutrition and reproduction are compromises made by the will to survive and to achieve at least a measure of immortality. Food is a necessity for a temporary personal survival of the body, the only dwelling place of spirit. The impulse for reproduction, although less constant, is as basic as that of nutrition, for it is man's substitute for personal immortality, itself an impossibility.⁵⁵ Thus the Spirit is friendlier and more tolerant of the simple distractions of the flesh because it realizes that they are part of man's physical nature.⁵⁶

⁵²Daniel Cory, Santayana: The Later Years (New York, 1963), p. 145.

⁵³See Santayana, "Distraction," The Realm of Spirit, pp. 119-181.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, p. 119.

⁵⁵Santayana, Reason in Religion, pp. 251-259, *passim*.

⁵⁶Santayana, The Realm of Spirit, p. 138.

However, both these primary instincts may grow complex and worldly, bringing ill consequences to spirit. To procure food man goes into the world as hunter, farmer, or sailor, continuing to the higher distraction of an advanced civilization which imposes a system of compulsory labor in which the laborer has lost sight of the desired product. Also the natural function of love and reproduction must be channeled into socially acceptable patterns of marriage and family life. Accordingly, the distractions of the World harass and enslave spirit "by creating a new set of artificial wants and compulsions: the human slavery to labour, war, politics, morality, and imposed religion."⁵⁷ The most insidious worldly distraction is that of Duty, or the world's proclamation of its needs of us.⁵⁸

The spirit's liberation from the world comes not from escaping the world but through understanding it. Secession from the world brings "moral penury" and even the more dire consequence of "extravagance and anarchy within the spirit."⁵⁹ This ultimate distraction to spirit is the Devil, or the internal distraction of a spirit which demands to rule or refuses to acknowledge the physical basis of intellectual and moral life: "It is a rebellion of spirit against the sources of spirit."⁶⁰ These claims to omnipotence and omniscience are not truly spiritual but instead are the voice of the natural self usurping the divine and transcendent nature of pure spirit. Spirituality becomes egotism.⁶¹

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 150.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 160.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 165.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 166.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 176.

The chapter recording Oliver's birth gives an example in miniature of the theme and structure of the entire novel in the description of the emergence of consciousness or Spirit and its distractions:

Goods and evils turned out to be arranged in a circle or sphere, in what nurse called his skin, or a little under this in what she called his tummy; but there were some goods and evils that escaped or came from beyond, such as the bottle when it was not yet or no longer in his mouth; and these potential goods and evils which nurse called things, extended very far and had a tremendously complicated life of their own, which Oliver himself afterwards called the world. Even that was not all: for deeper down and higher up than his tummy there was a lot of other goods and evils, not traceable by the eye, nor possible to run after and take hold of with the hand, when they showed a tendency to run away: and these were himself, his mind, or soul. The mind was the most entertaining and satisfactory region of all in which to keep your goods and evils: nobody else could get at them: and provided the evils were not too violent, like being carried away from what you wanted to do to what you didn't want to do, it was most amusing to have that private world of your own and talk to yourself about it. (p. 77)

But distractions beset the "budding philosopher" even at that early age:

Every day accentuated the difference between himself and what happened to him. Living, real, and self-justified was only his own Will, the inner spring of his being, the center and judge of all that unaccountably went on. The world might sometimes seem obsequious and willing to be commanded: but presently it became tiresome and did what it shouldn't do, and showed itself to be cruelly alien, besetting, and unavoidable. This inexplicable wrongness in the world extended inwards sometimes into his own person when his hands and feet wouldn't do things properly, or he choked or sneezed; all such interference of himself with himself was most ignominious and discouraging. Yes, and something even worse could happen. Fatality, or alien accident, could invade that secret self of his which nobody could see, and where at least he ought to have been able to play as he chose. But no: things would sometimes go wrong or run thin even there. The interest would die out, the pictures would fade or become ugly and frightening, and you couldn't stop the silly old words repeating and repeating themselves. (p. 77)

Likewise Oliver's character was established early. Pain is one of the purest distractions to spirit because it is man's first awareness that

all is not well in his physical world.⁶² The dominance of mind over body could be detected in baby Oliver in his stoic disregard of fatigue, heat, and the discomfort of a pebble in his shoe.

Food or Nutrition is the simplest recurrent distraction which Santayana used to show the ratio of animality to spirit in the various characters. Mrs. Darnley, born of peasant stock who lived close to the earth, is the least complex and the least spiritually developed character in the book. She is also one of the most realistically and sympathetically drawn characters although there are touches of humorous satire. Because of her physical nature, food was important to her, one of the primary concerns of her life. Grand sorrows did not trouble her, "but the price of eggs . . . the price of eggs!" (p. 276) "Creature comforts" were to her the "ultimate realities." (p. 533) Almost every passage concerning Mrs. Darnley discusses food and eating. Despite the seriousness of the occasion, this interjects a note of humor into the scene in which Mario visited Mrs. Darnley and Rose to tell them of the provisions of Oliver's will. Mrs. Darnley interrupted her eulogy of Oliver to express her real interest: "Do see about getting tea, Rose dear." (p. 585) Throughout the rest of the scene are scattered such observations as "'Indeed they [army doctors] are hardened,' sighed Mrs. Darnley, offering the bread and butter." And again, "Mrs. Darnley again wiped away a tear, shook some crumbs from her lap, and helped herself to a little more tea." (p. 586)

Food plays an important role in the characterization of Jim, the physical or bodily man. It is partly through the motif of food or

⁶²Ibid., p. 125.

eating that Jim's early influence on Oliver is shown. During the first dinner together on the yacht, Jim kept the dinner going in such perfect tempo that Oliver ate strange dishes without demur, which he ordinarily did not do, and even drank a half glass of wine, which he disliked. Then when he returned home, he deliberately defied his mother to eat with his left hand in the manner of Lord Jim. Their reunion in New York was highlighted to Jim by a good dinner and to Oliver by seeing the performance of Hamlet, a kindred Nordic spirit. Jim's true nature was revealed most clearly to Oliver on his visit to Iffley, when Jim took him along for a late supper and visit with Mrs. Bowler and Oliver realized that Jim was "altogether a bodily man, a fleshly man, caring only for food and women, money and a snug berth." (p. 269)

The Vicar as a spiritual man was an extreme opposite of his son. Never concerned about food and always abstemious, after Jim's death freed him from the consequences of his physical nature, he fasted until he wasted away and died.

Humor pervades the accounts of Irma's and Mrs. Alden's attitudes toward food, at the same time descriptively revealing their natures. Irma's letter to her sister describing the Thanksgiving feast is frequently cited as a highlight of the book. More than that, it is a graphic symbol of a feminine German world worshipper, a desire to enjoy every experience, as the romantic flight of fancy to savour vicariously the life of the Arab while tasting the luscious delicacy of dates. Harriet Alden as usual assumed the second-hand standards of the genteel tradition of what looked right and was fitting, just as she thought that "there was a fundamental fitness in sausages" for Tom Piper, the apothecary's son, although democracy required that she also serve him "a leg, not a wing of chicken." (p. 496)

In Mario's case, eating is used to show the balance in his life. The physical act of eating is performed gracefully and without the self-awareness that marks the other characters. As a schoolboy he served tea charmingly: "Guests were welcome without fuss and without shame and entertained nobly, with whatever you had to give them." (p. 297) Because food is necessary for one's physical life, which to Mario is the natural basis of being, he has no self-consciousness about it. He could be at home in a second-rate student inn or enjoy an elegant French restaurant. In contrast, food for Oliver was simply fuel to stoke the flame of spirit:

All sensation in Oliver was, as it were, retarded; it hardly became conscious until it became moral. What he asked of things was that they should produce a happy unconsciousness of all instrumentalities, and set the mind free for its own flights. . . . As to food and drink, anything would do that didn't poison you, that wasn't a drug. (pp. 159-160)

His favorite foods during high school were beef sandwiches, custard, and milk, all productive of the desired bodily euphoria. In the last train ride (the last scene in which Oliver figures) he "fortified himself with sandwiches and milk." (p. 533)

Reproduction, the second distraction of the Flesh, is a complex symbol which was used frequently by Santayana to show the relationship between spirit and matter. In addition to showing the kinship of the spirit to psyche, it is also the means by which man can procreate or transmit his ideal interests through his offspring and thus achieve a form of immortality. The symbol of reproduction necessarily includes both maternal and sexual aspects. The maternal relationship of the female psyche and the male spirit is illustrated in a vivid metaphor in The Realm of Spirit in which spirit is a "changeling child" born to an

ignorant young mother psyche who little understands her offspring.⁶³ In Santayana's poetic interpretation of Catholic dogma, the Virgin Mother Mary symbolized all nature and Christ all spirit.⁶⁴ Sexual love as a symbol of man's spiritual idealization had been employed by Santayana in his poetry and analyzed in his essay "Dante and Other Platonic Poets."

Both aspects of the male-female relationship figure in the structural symbolism of The Last Puritan. In the novel the male characters represent spirit in quest of a rational life; the female characters are the mediums of fulfillment. Sexual reproduction symbolizes the two aspects of immortality, physical procreation by which spirit can arise in another body and the expression of individual ideals within a society. The mother symbol serves a dual purpose of representing the animal psyche which gives birth to spirit and the cultural heritage which determines the spiritual nature of her offspring. Mother-son relationships also foretell the kind of sexual relationships and attitudes toward their physical nature the sons will have. The female objects of courtship similarly symbolize the cultural medium of religion or philosophy by which spirit hopes to fulfill its quest and consequently perpetuate its ideals. Thus the male-female relationship shows, to borrow Yolton's terminology, the spirit-matter relationship which includes a mind-body relationship and an individual-society relationship. Furthermore, just as in the distraction of nutrition, the attitude toward sexual behaviour is a stabilizing factor by which character is established and remains constant through the passage of time.

⁶³Ibid., p. 63.

⁶⁴George Santayana, "The Good Friday Hymn," The Poet's Testament: Poems and Two Plays (New York, 1953), p. 9.

To represent the varying levels of spiritual development and adjustment in the characters, the male-female relationships range from the Platonic idealization of women by Oliver to the worldly amours of Mario to the animal-like cohabitations of Jim Darnley. Jim's attitude toward his mother clearly indicated his adjustment toward existence in the physical world and foreshadowed the kind of sexual activity which he would always have. He was never quite himself except with his mother. There were no secrets between the two, and she would defend "her young cub" no matter what offense he might commit against society. (p. 164) In turn, he was the apple of her eye, and "she was really most in love with him" when she believed the worst about him. (p. 562) His philosophy of living reflected the same view he held of his mother:

The ruling powers of the world were like an impulsive mother who might make her child cry but didn't oblige him to let go her skirts or his faith in the sugarplums to come. (p. 169)

He possessed no spiritual depth and regarded Caleb's religious devotion as a substitute for the sexual love of which he was physically incapable, just as he surmised that Oliver's disillusion on learning of Jim's promiscuity was based on jealousy. Jim's sexual activities began early when as a young midshipman home on leave from training he fathered Bobby, the son of Mrs. Bowler, a married, experienced "man-hunter." The relationship was based on physical gratification, not love. More objectionable to the demands of spirit than the sexual act is the worldly consequences of that act, in this case, Bobby's illegitimacy. Here again Oliver's compassion for Bobby is meaningfully contrasted by Jim's lack of responsibility. Jim's liaison with Mrs. Bowler is closely tied to the other primary need of nutrition and to the primitive passion of killing. A trip to The King's Arms was for the two-fold needs of food

and sex. And there are strong grounds for Oliver's suspicions that Jim was instrumental in the death of Mr. Bowler. Although Jim's attitude toward sexual love had progressed to the point that he gave up his affair with Mrs. Bowler to plan for a "comfortable" marriage with an actress, Oliver knew that essentially Jim could never change and that he would not marry at all, or if he did, would be divorced within six months. Cynthia, like Mrs. Bowler, was just another "nice motherly bosom on which to rest." (pp. 368-369)

Jim's father, the Vicar, having a much deeper spiritual nature, is a contrast to Jim's physical existence, and, as the offshoot of British Protestantism, is also a contrast to Oliver's American puritanism. However, in the character of the Vicar, Santayana shows another "ultimate" Nordic type, whose spiritual vocation could not adjust to the natural world comfortably. The Vicar recognized the English church, in which he felt most at home, as a compromise, "a last human illusion for the spirit to shed." (p. 255) Similarly his sexual behaviour was a necessary compromise to the demands of the body. His marriage was a result of a chance encounter with a farmer's daughter in the woods when he was reading for Holy Orders. The "irreparable" happened and the impending arrival of Jim hastened an ill-matched marriage. Throughout the rest of his life the Vicar was followed by a sense of guilt and anxiety about the worldly consequence of his act, Jim. Only with Jim's death came the final release of spirit: "The child of nature had run its course and made its expiation." (p. 567)

The varying degrees and directions of the American puritan inheritance are reflected in sexual attitudes. Nathaniel's puritanism ended in a withdrawal from society and even from the very mention of bodily processes. He never married. The account of Peter's statement that

some fellows "had" their best girls without marriage was the last time that Nathaniel ever saw his half-brother again. Caleb Wetherbee sublimated his desire for spiritual expression into a religion foreign to his background and temperament without inheriting the basis of pagan naturalism on which Latin Catholicism is founded. Symbolically, his physical deformity deprived him of marriage.

Santayana gives the same attention to sexual symbolism in the minor characters. Harry Bumstead, studying theology in Germany, is not free to marry Irma, "vibrating to every political and poetical enthusiasm," (p. 84) since he was already engaged to a sedate librarian at Williams College and committed to a remnant of his religious heritage. The Reverend Edgar Thornton, who typified "perfect manliness consciously reconciled with supreme consecration," (p. 491) similar to Englishmen Oliver had seen, matched the sentimental, imitative religiosity of Edith; whereas Senator Lunt, the nonspiritual man of action, suitably became engaged to pragmatic Maud. Tom Piper, son of an apothecary and thus hardly a direct heir of the genteel tradition, nonetheless was attracted to Oliver and yearned for friendship. Feeling the great gap their futures will bring, Tom miserably left Oliver's home on High Bluff for the last time. With his mental acknowledgment that Oliver's way of life was denied him, and that Oliver wasn't happy anyway (the only happy people were "muckers" like Josh Burr), Tom immediately met Josh Burr and was initiated as a mucker himself.

Peter and Oliver, as major spiritual Americans, present the Puritan inability to reconcile mind and body. In each case the future is foreshadowed by the maternal relationship. Peter "had never known a mother, never enjoyed the voluminous soft protection of a wise woman." (p. 64) His Southern mother had been too preoccupied with her own beauty to give

him attention. One of the "greatest amusements" of his babyhood was the occasion of his half-sister Carolyn working "his arms and legs to prove he had joints." (p. 45) Yet when an interest in physical relationships with girls caused his banishment by Nathaniel and his residence with Carolyn, she let him sink or swim without furnishing the maternal guidance he needed. After a mock marriage with a Japanese girl, at a late age he married Harriet, seeking peace in conformity to the old familiar traditional Puritanism. Before the marriage Harriet's father was dubious if Peter could satisfy Harriet physically. Their marriage was not happy; an estrangement had always existed between them, and Peter spent more and more time traveling, visiting Great Falls infrequently, and finally escaping Harriet completely through death.

Oliver too was deprived of the maternal solicitude which might have prepared him for adjusting to the physical world. According to Harriet's father, "Mothering is not her element," (p. 85) which must be read at its deeper level to suggest the disregard of the genteel tradition for the physical nurture of the spirit. Thus while Oliver had a well-trained nurse whose "experience, duty, and science left little to chance," (p. 76) he lacked affection and physical fondling until Irma arrived to be his governess. Naturally affectionate and demonstrative, she ruffled his hair and stroked his bare legs until one day he hugged her in return. Knowing Mrs. Alden's puritan disapproval of showing emotions, Irma remonstrated that it would be wrong for him to love her more than his mother. Little Oliver could only conclude

the persons he ought to love best, like his mother and God, would always be impossible to hug and it would always be wrong to hug the others. (p. 96)

Once when he questioned his mother why Catholic Mrs. Murphy rather inconveniently held the youngest offspring in her lap while sewing,

Oliver remembered the long-denied privilege of sitting in his mother's lap. It had been such a refuge of safety, of softness, of vantage: you were carried and you were enveloped in an amplitude of sure protection. (p. 104)

Mario pinpointed Oliver's trouble by asking if he had been brought up on a bottle or had a wet nurse and then triumphantly diagnosed:

You don't know what a woman is. You are not comfortable with women. It's all because you never loved your mother and she never loved you. (p. 408)

Oliver's first courtship was with Edith. His decision to propose was purely intellectual. Edith would be the "right" person to regulate his social life, leaving his mind free; marriage to Edith would be an attempt to save his soul. Love to Oliver did not mean sensuality, and his physical advances were perfunctory and awkward. Edith, in whom sense was not dulled, refused him because

as a lover the boy was ridiculous, at once oldish and green. As a husband the man would be insupportable, a biting critic, a frigid tyrant, methodically making love. (p. 479)

She resented also her imagined role as a wife, similar to the domestic nun of a Calvin or Knox or Goethe "to deaden the itch of sense in them, and to stew their dinners." (p. 88)

Only once were Oliver's senses aroused, this time by a prostitute in Paris. Meaningfully this arousal of passion is curbed by another distaste for physical sense, an aversion to the smell of cucumbers and sardines on her breath. From these physical reactions emerged a mental illumination that Oliver himself as yet did not understand. To extricate himself from her advances, he excused himself by saying he was not free. During his later meditations, Oliver vacillated between the realization that only his own will had held him back, as it had done on previous occasions, and the thought that if something had held him back, then some other impulse had impelled him forward. This impulse of

physical nature should be satisfied in marriage.

Oliver had contemplated the idea of marriage to Rose off and on since their early "play" engagement, and now he wrote proposing marriage as the solution of everything. Because of Rose's own nature, Oliver's wooing of her was even less physical than that of his courtship of Edith. Their only physical contact was a sharing of Oliver's topcoat in the rain. He confessed that he was incapable of the passion of love, just as his parents had been: "It's not in our blood." (p. 575) Their marriage was not to be consummated immediately. Rose, like Edith, refused him, urging him to forego marriage for a spiritual vocation.

Meditation on his rejection by Rose led to Oliver's understanding of his attraction to Edith and Rose, to Jim and Mario, not as individuals in their own persons, but as Platonic symbols for his own needs. He knew that his college theme on Plato had been a misunderstanding. By realizing that he had tried to substitute idealized love of women and friends for divine love, Oliver was carried to self-understanding of his ultimate Puritanism or insistence by spirit that it alone exists and dominates:

The idea of a divine being, the real object of all my lives, is like my false Edith or my false Lord Jim, a mirage, an idol of the mind, an impossible object. Granted: yet the falser that object is, the stronger and clearer must have been the force in me that called it forth and compelled me to worship it. It is this force in myself that matters; to this I must be true. (p. 581)

In Mario's opinion Oliver would not have loved women otherwise if he had lived to be a hundred.

Mario's own love affairs are designed to show a rational acceptance of nature. As in the other characterizations, his mother, symbolizing his Catholic heredity, had instilled in him his attitude toward the ways of nature and the physical body. Mario understood and attributed his

ease and success with women to being nursed by his mother. Even as a little boy Mario thought of every woman as Woman and was regarded as "un bel maschio." His entrance into puberty was marked by a singing lesson of a love song "of passion but without illusion" (p. 411) chosen by his mother to teach him passion ("other women") was a part of life but he should never love them more than spiritual idealism (his mother), thus combining the two aspects of Catholicism--piety toward physical sources and renunciation or transcendence over it. Once Mario was brought up short when bragging about explaining to boys at school about what love really was by Oliver's challenge, "What is love really?" (p. 295) This brief passage expresses much of Santayana's thought about Nordic and Catholic spirit. As he acknowledged in the novel and elsewhere: "I think there is no great truth that sensitive Nordics don't sometimes discover: only they don't stick to their best insights." (p. 602) But as Santayana patiently explained to critics, his main concern was how spirit lives:

the concept of spirit doesn't interest me, except as a technicality; it is the life of spirit that I am talking about, the question what good, if any, there is in living, and where our treasure, if any, is to be laid up. It is a religious question.⁶⁵

Oliver's concept of love was greater than Mario's, but Mario's love found application in his life. He achieved moral balance between spirit and nature by confession, self-knowledge, and humility, lessons learned from his Catholic upbringing.

Mario's relationship with his grandmother was much the same as that with his mother and all women, contrasted with Oliver's thought that he

⁶⁵George Santayana, "Letter to Professor Schilpp," The Philosophy of George Santayana, p. 606.

loved his Aunt Carolyn because this was the "right" family for him. Carolyn in turn thought of Mario not as a grandson, "but just one last lovely young man" and he flirted with her "as he does with every woman, young or old." (p. 465)

The sexual theme is the technique by which piety toward physical origin is established and continued in Mario's maturing personality. His affairs began at an early age. The "running-after-women business" had already begun before the singing lesson. Oliver was shocked by schoolboy Mario's behavior toward Little Mildred, Peter's nurse, and toward the continuing succession of opera singers, professors' daughters, Jewish girls, and actresses that filled Mario's life. Being caught with an actress in his room was the cause for Mario's expulsion from Harvard and from the environs of the genteel tradition which he had violated. As previously noted, this emphasis on sexual behaviour to characterize his piety overshadows any spirituality in Mario and may be misleading. Mario's spirituality was, of course, limited. Accordingly, his love affairs culminated in marriage to Laura, symbolically named for Petrarch's heroine, not the idealized Beatrice of Dante, which Edith had wanted to represent to him. Santayana had contrasted Petrarchan poetry as "art greater than its thought" and Petrarch's dream of heaven as "only to hold his lady's hand and hear her voice,"⁶⁶ with Dante's Platonic "transformation of the love of particular persons into the love of God."⁶⁷ Mario's marriage to Laura reinforces his acknowledgment of being "frankly animal." (p. 600) Love to Mario never reached the Platonic

⁶⁶George Santayana, "Platonic Love in Some Italian Poets," Interpretations of Poetry and Religion, p. 131.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 120.

idealization that it had for Oliver, but it did symbolize a more rational balance of mind and body. His philosophy was that "love-making was in the nature of things," (p. 524) perhaps not a procedure a decent human being would have chosen but there and normal. His chivalry demanded that "if you're a man you must be ready to fight every other man and to make love to every pretty woman." (p. 524)

The closest reconciliation of mind and body is evidenced when neither dominates or is conscious of the other. Such moments of triumph may come "in childhood and in the simple life: wedding days and moonlight nights and victory in war and soft music and pious trust."⁶⁸ To show a rational harmony of body and spirit in Mario's lovemaking, Santayana emphasizes the characteristic of lacking self-consciousness, just as Mario is characterized by naturalness in eating and other social occasions. Oliver noted that when Mario flirted with Little Mildred, he didn't laugh or joke or hide or look bashful as did the youths of Oliver's home acquaintance. The janitor at Harvard observed that the light was on full blast even in the bedroom during Mario's escapade with Aida de Lancey. The secret of Mario's success with Rose was that "he entirely forgot himself." (p. 574)

When the primary distractions of nutrition and reproduction grow complex and complicated by their involvement with other people and customs established by a society, the second distraction to spirit, that of the World or Duty, begins. As heir to the genteel tradition, Oliver was throughout his life hedged in by the demands of a second-hand morality and a materialistic democracy, eternally confronted by his "Duty to Others." One of Oliver's earliest lessons was that "Time, the right

⁶⁸Santayana, The Realm of Spirit, p. 192.

time for each thing, was the most sacred of the standards one had to live up to." (p. 93) More and more the spontaneity of emotion and physical impulse was buried by the regimen of tradition and social approval. In the Alden household the manner of eating was more important than the food itself. Sexual reproduction was constrained on two sides. Any overt display of emotion was frowned upon, just as any mention of such a subject was to be avoided. On the other hand, it was one's Duty to marry and have a family to keep the world going, just as it was one's Duty to go to a democratic public school, to play football, to be courteous to Others, to make money, to have a profession, to study philosophy, and to go to war. Although it had forgotten the physical basis of its demands and had discarded their religious foundations, Society demanded these Duties of Oliver Alden and he obeyed perfunctorily but agonizingly.

Like the distraction of reproduction in which an individual relationship became an idealization, the distraction of Duty in Oliver tended to become ultimate and its fulfillment devoted to the pacification of spirit. This trait is indicated by young Oliver's attitude toward his pony. A five-year-old "wishes to be the centre of direction, if not the source of material power," and Oliver soon realized "that it was his duty to rule and he knew how to do it. Dumpy became the symbol of worlds to conquer." (pp. 100-101) In high school new duties quickly took the place of executed lessons and athletic activities, "but at least there was a silent moment of peace as each duty--each enemy--was dispatched in turn." (p. 128) Later he found "War was like football," a duty in which he acquiesced, not for the false reasons society gave but as the means by which "the physical man in him was engaged healthily, and seemed to move in unison with the world." (p. 541) The World makes

its deepest demands through religion and philosophy. While it was Oliver's Duty to learn what the authorities in the field taught, study only confirmed his inward assurance that he was right. Spirit's freedom from the World comes from understanding the World and renouncing it. The World had demanded that Oliver be "a conscript son, a conscript schoolboy, a conscript athlete, a conscript soldier," and almost "a conscript husband." (p. 582) Materially these claims on him might continue, just as he would continue to fight the war because it was his duty, but by rejecting its claims on his inner self Oliver overcame the World.

Freed from the distractions of the World, Oliver's third distraction is the sin of Lucifer, the temptation of the Devil, a condition described in Reason in Religion:

Those whom a genuine spirituality has freed from the foolish enchantment of words and conventions and brought back to a natural ideal, have still another illusion to vanquish, one into which the very concentration and deepening of their light might lead them. This illusion is that they and their chosen interests alone are important or have a legitimate place in the moral world. Having discovered what is really good for themselves, they assume that the like is good for everybody. Having made a tolerable synthesis and purification of their own natures, they require every other nature composed of the same elements similarly combined. What they have vanquished in themselves they disregard in others; and the consequence sometimes is that an impossibly simplified and inconsiderate regimen is proposed to mankind, altogether unrepresentative of their total interests. Spiritual men, in a word, may fall into an aristocrat's fallacy; they may forget the infinite animal and vulgar life which remains quite disjointed, impulsive, and short-winded, but which nevertheless palpitates with joys and sorrows, and makes after all the bulk of moral values in this democratic world.⁶⁹

This theme for the novel and its historical antecedents in Calvinism are introduced in the Prologue as "Oliver's secret . . . the tragedy of

⁶⁹Santayana, Reason in Religion, p. 214.

spirit when it's not content to understand but wishes to govern." (pp. 9-10) And, Santayana warns, it was a spirit so dictatorial that he was capable of imposing a regimen on the world like that of red communism that says, "Be like me or die." (p. i) Inheritor of a strict Puritan morality and a transcendental philosophy which denied the natural world, Oliver was born with "an inner oracle that condemned and rejected and was sure of being itself right." (p. 78) The outside world was meaningful only as it was moralized and became part of his inner self, and his ego hated to acknowledge the existence of "anything not to be dominated, and not relevant to his own life." (p. 208)

This need for spiritual domination is shown primarily in the pattern of his friendships. Oliver's progression of friends, the initial warmth of their relationships, and the decreasing ties show the distractions and the eventual triumph of spirit in Oliver's realization that he had been attracted only by his own ideals which he had transferred to them. His friendships were begun in an attempt to find in the other person the element of animal or worldly life which was lacking in himself; yet the friendships waned because he tried to impose his own spiritual nature upon his friends. Friendship for Oliver could never be complete and successful because spirit in him required a moral unanimity, the dominance of spirit in others as it dominated him. Significantly in team sports, Oliver had to be quarterback to call the signals or the stroke, the center of a rowing team. With the exception of Tom Piper, for whom Oliver showed more compassion than friendship, Oliver "seemed to make no friends in high school," (p. 128) for in Great Falls the genteel tradition was accepted and the artificial reconciliation of mind and matter held little attraction for him. His first real friend was Lord Jim. "Friendship," according to Santayana, "is almost always the

union of a part of one mind with a part of another; people are friends in spots."⁷⁰ The friendship between Oliver and Jim was based on physical ties. Oliver, with awakened interest in his physical being, found

Jim was a splendid comrade, an ideal elder brother, a first and only friend. Two young men alone in the wilds, sharing the same adventures, eating, working and sleeping in company find life reduced to what both can share. Deeper or ulterior differences between them are submerged in this physical union. (p. 207)

At first Oliver seemed under the domination of Jim. Then prophetically their reunion in New York gave Oliver an opportunity to show his superior understanding of the spiritual Hamlet, which Jim saw as bombast. With Oliver's visit to Iffley, he learned through experience and intuition that Jim's apparently innocent physical nature had more sinister consequences in his illicit relationship with Mrs. Bowler and the murder of her husband. Thus the basis of their friendship--Jim's animal nature--was also the source of its dissolution. Oliver, learning Jim was "altogether a bodily man," (p. 269) demanded more. Furthermore, he saw his influence over Jim was limited because Jim didn't really "care" for him. From then on Jim could only be a "handy-man . . . a hanger-on," (p. 269) but Oliver questioned if he could ever be a friend.

Oliver's next attempt at friendship was with Mario. In their growing intimacy during the Aldens' stay at Eton, Oliver saw the promise of a new relationship based, not primarily on physical interests, but on intellectual bonds:

He wants to see things as I see them, in the same light, from the same angles, so that there may be one object for two minds, one feeling in two persons. Everything then becomes a bond of union. (p. 354)

⁷⁰George Santayana, "Friendships," Soliloquies in England and Later Soliloquies, p. 55.

Mario's impending trip to America excited Oliver with the prospect of extending his influence throughout his cousin's life. Despite Mario's self-sufficiency (except for money) on his arrival, Oliver's hope of establishing spiritual kinship persisted. In the Harvard infirmary, Oliver was comforted by a visit by Mario and Edith and thought that here were his "natural friends" with whom he felt "at home at last." (p. 400)

Mario's expulsion from Harvard finally proved to Oliver that, as with Jim, he was unable to change Mario's basic nature and he concluded of Mario:

He didn't need your advice, he didn't respect your philosophy. He loved you, perhaps, a little, because he was warm-hearted, and you had been kind to him: yet in his heart he dared to despise you, yes, and to pity you. (p. 446)

His expectations cheated again, Oliver turned to Edith with a proposal of marriage in which she would adapt to his way of living, not that he would become a part of hers, just as his later proposal to Rose demanded essentially the same.

From each relationship Oliver demanded a spiritual union, which is not possible, a fact he recognized when he saw that Rose, Edith, Jim, and Mario were only images of his own desires. With this self-knowledge came the perception of his similarity to his Puritan forebears and to Nathaniel. The reader is reminded of Nathaniel's secret conviction "that human beings could be united only in the common sphere of actions; they remained for ever separated and solitary in their thoughts." (p. 38)

An important function of this symbol of final distraction is to show how Oliver was the ultimate Puritan, that is how "he convinced himself, on puritan grounds, that it was wrong to be a Puritan." (p. 6) Oliver, ordained by temperament and heredity, to be a Puritan, must

maintain that position for himself while at the same time recognizing the moral relativity of a spiritual life for others. Santayana had outlined this dilemma and resolved it in Reason in Religion by charting a course between the two extremes of "fanatical insistence" upon one's own ideal and a "mystical disintegration," which by attempting to serve all interests retains no real allegiance to any ideal. Between these two is the path of reason and charity. Charity necessarily retains an "absolutely authoritative" ultimate ideal because any relaxation of that ideal would be the substitution of a new ideal.⁷¹ To preclude the supplanting of its authority, the ultimate ideal must have considered all interests and be "universally representative," which means

to intend, as far as possible, to secure the particular good for which that particular interest looks to, and never, whatever measures may be adopted, to cease to look back on the elementary impulse as upon something which ought, if possible, to have been satisfied, and which we should still go back and satisfy now, if circumstances and the claims of rival interests permitted.⁷²

Charity may reject impulse when reason judges it in the context of life in competition with other impulses, but charity can never deny its initial right.

Thus Oliver, not suited to be "a soldier, nor an athlete, nor a lover of women, nor a husband, nor a father . . . the principal virtues of the natural man," (p. 254) must yet recognize the inherent rightness of physical impulses and natural demands and weigh them in the scales of reason and his ultimate ideal. Like Mario's, Oliver's evolution was natural and "all of a piece." Born a "moral aristocrat, able to obey

⁷¹Santayana, Reason in Religion, p. 215.

⁷²Ibid., pp. 215-216.

only the voice of God, which means that of [his] own heart," (p. 581) he suffered and overcame the temptations of Flesh and the World and retained his spiritual nature, only to fall prey to the Devil. Then came Oliver's final development as the ultimate Puritan. His spirit, which had found competitive ideals wanting, forced him to the recognition of the relativity of his own ideals and to Charity which, in human perspective, can be practised "on occasion." (p. 583)

"What constitutes the individual expressiveness of . . . things is the circle of thoughts allied to each in a given mind; my words, for instance, express the thoughts which they actually arouse in the reader; they may express more to one man than to another, and to me they may have expressed more or less than to you. My thoughts remain unexpressed, if my words do not arouse them in you . . . (The Sense of Beauty, p. 195)

CHAPTER IV

EXPRESSION

In addition to the structural symbols of the spiritual distractions of the Flesh, the World, and the Devil, the intricate correspondence between aesthetic form and logical content of The Last Puritan is further illustrated by lesser patterns of imagery. Probably no object or event in the book is used simply to tell the story or make it "true to life" without some added depth of meaning which has its antecedents in Santayana's moral and aesthetic philosophy. This leads to the assertion of one critic that Santayana wrote, even in The Last Puritan, in a language understood only by the initiate,¹ a charge which, I think, is true to a degree. The use of the same figures of speech, of symbols, and of similar themes in many of his works produces the effect that it does in the writings of any author of depth with whom a reader increases his familiarity. As the reader becomes accustomed to a repeated image or symbolic pattern, there is an accrual of meaning not evident to the beginning reader. Certainly this is true of The Last Puritan.

¹Paul Arthur Schilpp, "The Roman Brahmin," The Saturday Review, XXXV (November 1, 1952), p. 19.

Few novelists have the deeper understanding of the philosophic basis of symbols which Santayana had. His account of man's religious history in Reason in Religion reveals the abstruse link between the physical world as the realm of matter and as a symbol for man's moral imagination. Mythology was the offspring of primitive man's attempt to explain natural phenomena which he did not understand scientifically. As his experience and knowledge increased, his myths were directed increasingly toward the moral characteristics which he had ascribed to the natural world. The dissolution of mythology into Platonism and Stoicism assigned to nature the conflicting characteristics of idealism on the one hand and pantheism on the other. A similar contradiction was present in Christianity, which in Protestantism also evolved into pantheism. The young Irma was described as religious but without "any abstract notion of religion," but saw God only "in Nature and Society and the conscience of man." (p. 86) The pantheistic feeling absorbed from reading Goethe progressed to more modern German subjective philosophy expressed in her declaration that "Nature is a prison. As for me, give me Chaos." (p. 111)

Calvinism had emphasized the pantheistic strain of Christianity which identified God as Creator and then attempted to justify the existence of evil in nature. Like Hawthorne and other writers of the Puritan conscience, Santayana utilized in his characterizations the ingrained tendency to identify natural objects with spiritual conditions. Because gentility had supplanted religious belief, he humorously satirized this bent of mind. Peter's physical vitality caused Nathaniel

to observe that those who run down hill find some difficulty in stopping half-way. Some day the unhappy child would roll into the pond, and what was Frog Pond but a symbol for the pit of perdition. Not, of course, that Mr. Alden could

entertain any longer the shocking idea of hell; but relief from religious terrors had merely brought the fatal consequences of evil doing nearer home, most annoyingly, among the relations of the culprit. (p. 28)

The Reverend Dr. Hart, seeing King's Chapel surrounded by a "Babel of business," thought it "a symbol of that invisible goodness of heart and integrity of purpose which would always stand unassailable amid the ruin of creeds." (p. 32) Emancipated from both Puritan creed and the genteel tradition but still influenced by its philosophy of spiritual domination, Oliver frequently saw outward objects as symbols of the inability of spirit to join compatibly with its physical body and world. The gyration of a revolving chair became a symbol for his mind seeking an unavailable outlet; his life was like a flight of stairs without doors, offering no choice except a compulsion to continue.

The tracing of the history of moral and religious symbols to their origin in natural phenomena carries logically to Santayana's theory that art is a symbol of man's idealism. His discussion of poetic symbolism emphasizes these philosophic implications. Man's "language is a symbol for intelligence."² To make his way through the "labyrinth of subjects" in his sensuous experience, man must be selective as to what is insignificant and to be passed over and at the same time piece out what is significant "with such an ideal complement as is necessary to turn it into a fixed and well-ordered world." In everyday life this perception and understanding of his experience is voiced in a prosaic, utilitarian language.³ He becomes so accustomed to thinking entirely in symbols

²Santayana, "The Elements of Poetry," p. 253.

³Ibid., p. 259. While this essay relates Santayana's theory of poetic expression, the parts pertaining to symbols appear relevant to the symbolism of the novel.

that he loses sight of the "torrent of sensation and imagery over which the bridge of prosaic associations habitually carries us safe and dry to some conventional art."⁴ The poet, however,

breaks up the trite conceptions designated by current words into the sensuous qualities out of which these conceptions were originally put together.⁵

He gathers his images from superfluous sensations or emotions which have dropped from the utilitarian language and re-attaches it to its object.⁶

He intensifies emotion by understanding the affinity of seemingly disparate ideas and things by seeing the common element of the emotion each arouses.⁷

Yet the poetic reproduction of perception and emotion in a mixed and indiscriminate form by itself is inadequate for poetry on a higher level.⁸ Poetry has a higher function. The world of science and practice which evolve from our experience with nature are not sufficient to satisfy man's inner needs in the light of his constantly impending death and his quest for the value of his life. These satisfactions he seeks in illusions and passions.⁹ Poetic opportunity comes with awareness of "the artificiality and inadequacy" of commonsense perception to furnish an ideality to make experience meaningful.¹⁰ Hence, the highest function of

⁴Ibid., p. 260.

⁵Ibid., p. 258.

⁶Ibid., p. 261.

⁷Ibid., p. 263.

⁸Ibid., p. 265.

⁹Ibid., p. 268.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 269.

poetry--and of religion, which is but poetry of the highest kind--is

to repair to the material of experience, seizing hold of the reality of sensation and fancy beneath the surface of conventional ideals, and then out of that living but indefinite material to build new structures, richer, finer, fitter to the primary tendencies of our nature, truer to the ultimate possibilities of the soul.¹¹

The subject matter of poetry, like that of science and common sense, is experience; but the approaches differ. To the logical and orderly concept of a scientific or practical imagination, the poet adds moral values.¹² In poetry "the images rejected by practical thought and the emotions ignored by it, are so marshalled as to fill the mind with a truer and intenser consciousness of its memorable experience."¹³

In order to convey in The Last Puritan the moral values man demands to give idealism to his practical life, Santayana turned to two kinds of external experiences as the sources of his symbolism. First, there are the natural objects to which the unsophisticated mind of primitive man perhaps once attached religious significance and to which sensitive minds of all ages, when they disengage the experience from its common sense meaning, are led to moral implications. Secondly, he reattaches the moral origins to everyday habits and institutions from which those experiences have arisen but are no longer perceived by the people who practice them. In the novel definite patterns of such symbols represent man's attempts, his successes and failures, to find a rational synthesis between everyday experience and a meaning for his life and point to the inherent conflict in man as a physical animal and a spiritual creature.

¹¹Ibid., p. 270.

¹²Ibid., pp. 270-271.

¹³Ibid., pp. 271-272.

For the purpose of organization, the leitmotifs of the novel will be divided somewhat arbitrarily and with much overlapping into John Yolton's divisions of the philosophical themes of the novel: the antithesis of spirit-matter, embodying the corollaries of mind-body and individual-society antitheses.

The spirit-matter relationships in general find their objective correlatives in nature. According to Santayana's theory of poetry, which has its parallel in the novel, "the visual landscape is not a proper object for poetry" except "as an element and associate of moral unities." Man does, however, live in and is aware of a larger landscape than the one which his eyes synthesize--a cosmic landscape of sea and sky and earth. One part of poetry is to render landscape in this topographical sense so that a moral perspective can be gained from it.¹⁴ Santayana constructs a cosmic landscape in the novel principally through the symbols of land and sea to show the contrast between the immense scope and power of nature and man's limited capacity to impose his will upon nature. The source of the idea is revealed in his biography:

From the beginning I learned to think of the earth as a globe with its surface chiefly salt water, a barren treacherous and intractable waste for mankind, yet tempting and beautiful and swarming with primitive animals not possible to tame or humanise but sometimes good to eat. In fine, I opened my eyes on the world with the conviction that it was inhuman: not meant for men, but habitable by him, and possible to exploit, with prudence, in innumerable ways: a conviction that everything ever since has confirmed.¹⁵

The constant movement and power of the sea has suggested to many writers the overwhelming and impersonal force of nature against which man is

¹⁴Ibid., p. 274.

¹⁵George Santayana, My Host the World, Vol. III: Persons and Places (New York, 1953), p. 133.

helpless, forcing him to construct a ship of philosophy for the voyage of life. Santayana's symbolic use of the sea has yet another point of contact with its deeper meaning. Biological life first evolved in the sea and through the characters' affinity toward the sea is shown spirit's evolvment from and necessary attachment to its physical basis in matter. When Peter Alden as a youngster had discovered his awakening physical sense and had been disowned by Nathaniel, Dr. Hand, the physician suggested that the medicine that would be most beneficial to Peter would be a summer spent on a yacht, an idea rejected by Nathaniel. After Peter's college career ended with the accidental killing of the night watchman, his life became a long Ishmael-like voyage always seeking a place or culture or philosophy in which the two sides of his nature could be harmonized. Tragically he failed and was forced to construct "a fancy ship not like anyone else's," (p. 134) furnished with an eclectic collection of ideas gathered in his world-wide travels. When Peter's "mock marriage" to a Japanese girl terminated amicably, he chartered a junk to sail the great rivers of China while living "in his own house." (p. 52) Travel to the Islamic countries only further taught him one lesson from the East

which rendered all further religion and philosophy superfluous: namely that there is no power save Unsearchable Power, and what will be, will be. (p. 54)

His only relief came in travel, drink, and the Indian-like withdrawal in drugs. Sojourns in the Mediterranean birthplace of classicism and study of psychology in Paris found him too old to adjust to a new "moral climate." He sought a port in marriage with Harriet with the intention of breaking up the exotic Old Junk to build the Hesperus "which brings all things home . . . the child to the mother" (p. 64) and Peter back to the familiar confines of Puritanism.

Peter's relationship to the sea must be studied in conjunction with his relationship to Lord Jim and Jim's affinity for the sea or matter. For it was Jim who encouraged him to sell the Hesperus and emancipate himself from Puritanism--"plenty of fools to buy her" and build "a true blue-water ship after his own heart," (p. 157) the Black Swan. Like Oliver, who confessed to Rose his dependence upon his friends to give him a "lead," Peter could not in himself adapt spirit to matter and needed Jim Darnley as captain of his yachts, but he also realized the danger of Jim's actual ownership of the Black Swan, contingent upon Peter's death, a temptation Jim might not withstand. Too old and weary even to plan a sunny villa at Nice or Cannes to "look out over the sea" (p. 330) where Jim might visit, Peter withdrew entirely by suicide.

Jim, as natural man, achieves a certain heroic stature, for even animal sensation has by its very existence a place in the eternal, and spirit's sympathy toward the primary animal instincts is greater than that toward worldly claims. But animal instincts must necessarily be guided by worldly demands, and Jim has become the sailor to fulfill basic needs. His affinity to the sea is played up in the use of allusions to Conrad's Lord Jim.¹⁶ When he first met Lord Jim, Oliver asked his father if Jim, like Conrad's hero, dropped off into a dream at critical moments as if he had taken a drug. But Peter replied that Jim Darnley dropped off in a dream only in lax moments on shore, while at sea he was wonderfully alert. The Lord Jim allusion is, of course,

¹⁶There is, I think, a much greater parallel between the two characters of Conrad and Santayana than is seen by Ballowe, who thinks the resemblance limited to name, physical appearance, and immersion in the "destructive element." (Ballowe, p. 86) A more important similarity is in the British "inner climate" and his attempt to reconcile what a man expects of himself to his real existence through a kind of make-believe or compromise convention.

furthered by Jim's prolonged dive in the sea or immersion in matter, as Stein advised Lord Jim to immerse himself in romanticism. This dive, which affected Oliver so profoundly, was prophetic of Jim's warning that if he were forsaken by Oliver he "could take a good long dive into the sea, and never come up again," (p. 266) and of his death by drowning when his ship went down during the war. Oliver's numbed despair at Jim's death shows spirit's victory in the long conflict with his physical nature. He had experienced once before this same fearful feeling, the same emotion as he had felt on the day of Jim's playful dive into the sea but with one meaningful exception. At Iffley hearing Jim's confession that Bobby was his illegitimate son, Oliver felt

only a sickening blank, as on that first afternoon on the yacht, when Jim had dived and seemed never to come up again. Yet there was a strange difference. Now Oliver was not waiting. There was nothing to look for, no future. Only the cold fact, like a gravestone, that Jim had gone under for good. (p. 262)

The Lord Jim parallel is continued by Oliver's realization that while Jim Darnley still lived, his ideal of "Lord Jim had died a long time ago." (p. 270) But the old attraction never really completely died, and at Oliver and Jim's last meeting "glints of the old Lord Jim would come now and then to the surface, to reopen Oliver's wounds and make it impossible for him to become altogether resigned and indifferent." (p. 516) Oliver saw "what a perfect creature Jim might have been" if it were possible to separate the necessary animal drives from worldly distractions, if "there [were] only sea and no land, only ships and no ports, only men and no women." (p. 360) However, even the ship by which man can sail over the sea represents some human convention and compromise, and in reality Jim had never existed as the innocent natural man even on ship. The scandal which closed his budding naval career suggests that sexual perversion

was practiced during his midshipman life. Later he poisoned his mate on the Black Swan, although no reason is given.

Oliver's fascination with water began with glimpses of the river and water-mills in Great Falls:

What is there in the universe more fascinating than running water and the possibility of moving over it. What better image of possible triumph? (p. 102)

His first visit to his father's yacht brought an emotional reaction to the sea so intense that Peter warned him that the sea swallows the intelligence of those who like it too much before swallowing them physically. His growing friendship with Jim measured the increasing attraction of physical matter to Oliver. He was exhilarated to escape the fustiness of Caleb Wetherbee's house and his cousin's stale religious convictions to the clean night air and the freedom of the Black Swan with Jim. The lure of the sea and Jim was not strong enough in Oliver however, to resist the call of duty to his school. By the time Oliver and Jim met again at sea in an ocean liner on Oliver's return to America, Oliver realized that

man was a land animal. He could live at sea only on land provisions; and into the midst of an infinite ocean he was bound to lug his tight little cask of land water, or he would die of thirst . . . (p. 360)

While he could never disown Lord Jim for traveling "second class," his own interest had turned from Lord Jim to Mario. During his next two years at Williams Oliver never saw the sea.

No special affinity to the sea is emphasized in the characterization of Mario, since he is able to balance piety toward his natural sources and his spiritual life. His life on sea is the same as on the land. His first trip to America simply offered an occasion for another romance, and his voyage around the world with Oliver only "confirmed him

in his native ways." (p. 508)

Natural imagery on a less cosmic scale is also employed to point out spiritual and animal interests. One of Santayana's eloquent essays described the skylark as a symbol of what the imprisoned spirit of Englishmen would be in its perfect freedom. The larks, although having no less a proportion of matter in their bodies than ours and having no reprieve from bodily necessities, nonetheless, "because their flight is bodily, because it is a festive outpouring of animal vitality, not of art or reflection, it suggests to us a total freedom of the inner man, a freedom which is impossible."¹⁷ Birds, in one example, the delectable duck of the Thanksgiving dinner, are similarly used in the novel. Seeing a flight of birds, young Oliver felt the tragedy of the lead bird, losing his will by tyrannically imposing his leadership upon the flock, or perhaps not leading at all but being mercilessly driven by the others.

In contrast to the bird imagery to describe spirit, is the less obvious animal imagery to describe the dominance of man's physical being in particular characters or at certain times in the lives of more spiritual characters. Young Peter, in whom sexual awareness was maturing, was restrained by the presence of his step-brother Nathaniel from a "canine impulse" to explore side alleys. Oliver's awakening into manhood and the influence of his friendship with Jim Darnley is described also with a canine image:

The young sheep's dog by chance had smelt blood, and the ancient wolf-nature awakened within him. (p. 225)

Jim as the least spiritual man is of course more frequently described in animal similes and in numerous references to his body warmth. Peter

¹⁷George Santayana, "Skylarks," Soliloquies in England and Later Soliloquies, p. 108.

thought that willing the Black Swan to Jim was a temptation to him like showing a dog a biscuit without giving it to him. Jim is described in several instances as displaying doglike fawning and as his mother's "cub." Mrs. Darnley also as a "natural" woman is occasionally described in animal imagery. Jim spoke of his mother to Oliver as "bred to poor people's hard life, who nose their way about like animals between the gaol and the workhouse." (p. 164) Significant to the animal motif is Jim's conception outdoors in the woods.

Nature is used in a few incidents to display the failure of the American culture to provide aesthetic or religious mediums of spiritual expression. "Music and landscape," Santayana wrote, "make up the spiritual resources of those who cannot or dare not express their unfulfilled ideals in words." Denied serious poetry or profound religion by the genteel tradition, Americans found a spiritual kinship in their natural surroundings.¹⁸ The American love of landscape was noted in Oliver by Irma and Mario. Only by mentioning the natural beauties to be seen by traveling, could Irma excite interest, for her "dear pupil after all is an American: to him the past is foreign and dead." (p. 200) To Oliver's confession that he liked trees better than buildings, Mario declared that "all Americans do, only they won't say so." (p. 295)

Mind-body contrasts are also predominant symbols to show the inability of Protestant religion and philosophy to harmonize spiritual and material interests. Outward appearances, physical defects, and mental quirks and aberrations depict unbalanced relationships between mind and body. The importance of clothes as a symbol is established in the

¹⁸Santayana, "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy," p. 200.

prologue with the implication that Mario's elegant dress is the consequence of his "full human nature." (p. 4) Mario's heritage of an established creed provided for the expression of spirit in a natural way denied to the Puritan Oliver, and Mario's freedom in dress is contrasted with Oliver's self-consciousness. Harriet, retaining the strictures of Puritanism although denying their religious basis, clung to her "Priscilla costume" which, as Irma rightly deduced, kept her from having to think what to put on, just as she resisted thinking about a meaningful philosophy. Oliver too, Irma wrote to her sister, "is just like his mother" in respect to dress. (p. 186) Yet Oliver's growing awareness of the inadequacy of the remnant of Puritanism in the genteel tradition and his progressive discarding of its influence are reflected in his dress. His first change came in high school with his secret envy of his common schoolmates. Deciding "externals were burdens," (p. 129) Oliver discarded his gold watch chain and waistcoat despite his mother's objections. The desire to shed meaningless externals in clothes and creed to get to the natural physical basis of one's being is furthered by his intimacy with Lord Jim. Jim's scorn of bathing suit caused Oliver embarrassment until he could rationalize that simple nakedness was not improper even according to his mother and Irma. Even so, in his nervousness he dropped a gold collar button and knitted shoelaces overboard. His own venture into naturalism is indicated by discarding his underwear, which he justified on "hygienic and moral grounds." (p. 205) Distressed with the sordid consequences of Jim's physical nature and his own lack of a sustaining philosophy, Oliver at Iffley dreamed of himself in a "little black coat, much too short for him in the sleeves, and with only one button left to hold it together in front, when he had nothing on under it." (p. 270) With the dissipation of Jim's influence Oliver

became aware of the rakish elegance of Mario's dress. However, Mario's freedom about dress which allowed him to discard his hat and tie in the heat of New York so disturbed the self-conscious and idealistic Oliver that he bought his cousin a sky-blue knitted silk tie, very like one knitted by Rose for her brother. Oliver's inability to shed the strait-jacket of Puritanic thought is symbolized by Rose's comparison of his military uniform as "prim wretched ugliness without a function" while Mario wore his uniform "with so much ease and dash." (p. 574)

Clothes are the outward manifestations of inward feeling in other characters as well. Nathaniel's stiff, old-fashioned dress (spoiled only by soiled gloves) is contrasted with the fashionable décolleté of his step-sister Caroline, who was never truly a part of the Puritan tradition. Peter Alden created his own style of dress, a "gently comic parody of elderly fashion and elegance, things he had despised when young," now adopted and worn with comfort and freedom. (p. 308) His dress, like his philosophic beliefs, was an eclectic style, now dated and unfashionable, neither conforming to nor flouting the dictates of the genteel tradition. James Van de Weyer, American businessman, believed in good taste in morals and in dress, adhering to the ultimate standard of "It is generally believed or It is coming to be held more and more widely, or It is thought in Wall Street." (p. 452)

In Reason and Religion Santayana described Germanic Christianity during the Middle Ages as under the sway of fashion, now imitating its Latin model, now revulsed by it, now fancifully originating its own creations. Fashion, which is barbaric because "it produces innovation without reason and imitation without benefit," is "characteristic of occidental society in medieval and modern times because the society is led by people who, being educated in a foreign culture, remain barbarians at

at heart." Some simply imbibe the past and thus produce no fruit except sentimentality; others are simply protestants, active in the moral sphere only through rebellion.¹⁹ Edith's fashionable dress (she felt fashion and elegance a responsibility) and quasi-medieval jewels, as well as her actions, reveal her as one in whom allegiance to traditional religion produces only imitation and sentimentality.

Physical appearance and health are also indicators of spiritual or physical predominance and their conflict. The bald author must have been amused over his use of hair as a symbol of animal vitality, since the physical description of almost every character emphasizes the condition and appearance of hair. Nathaniel's thin hair faded from sandy to greenish white. Peter was bald. Nordic Oliver, born with "a little fuzz of limp, yellow hair," (p. 76) before his death had lank, thin strands. Jim's hair was initially thick and curly, but he grew a little bald as he became more corrupted by the world. Oliver's and Jim's natures are contrasted by the description of them as they entered Iffley Church to hear the Vicar's sermon:

a beam of the evening sun had entered with them, gilding their two blond heads, Jim's tenaciously curling and wiry, turning to chestnut, and Oliver's naturally pale and lank, but at that moment dishevelled by the journey and intricately catching the golden light. (p. 249)

Young Vanny's healthy regard for matter is shown by his thick curly hair and his early need to shave. In keeping with his description as a pagan god, which Oliver had observed on their first meeting, the grown-up Mario, "the ageless and inscrutable Mario," had "the waving ends of his brown hair . . . bleached here and there in the sun . . . like pale traces of gilding in some ancient image." (p. 384)

¹⁹Santayana, Reason in Religion, p. 114.

The nature of the women is also characterized by descriptions of their hair. Harriet Alden liked Irma to brush her hair

which was not only pleasant (Mrs. Alden wouldn't have cared much for that) but excellent for the scalp, where the hair was getting rather thin, and to keep away her neuralgia. (p. 90)

Later Irma had to spread carefully and secretly supplement Mrs. Alden's thinning hair. Animal-like Mrs. Darnley had a

dusky and rather ill-smelling head . . . Oliver noticed that the hair over her temples was thin and faded, and quite different from the frowzy, brown front, like Queen Alexandra's, which she wore on top. (pp. 376-377)

Rose's golden yellow hair is repeatedly mentioned. Edith, whose spiritual outlet was through sentimentalized but traditional church activities, had "heavy brown hair . . . looped in classic waves." (p. 462)

Maud had "a lot of frizzled hair . . . not at all like Rose Darnley's really beautiful hair, spread in broad masses, and not crimped artificially." (p. 462)

Physical defects represent an over-balance of spirit in the individual. Peter suffered frequent illnesses during his early searches for a philosophy compatible with spirit, and after "he was rehabilitated, rechristened, almost forgiven" as an M. D. in the Boston Blue Book, he continued to aggravate "his real weaknesses by continually dwelling upon them." (p. 56) It is, of course, Caleb Wetherbee's deformity which most emphasizes the inadequacy of external mediums by which spirit may be expressed. Santayana described deformity as an expression of "the sad plight of the spirit that can't express itself."²⁰ Caleb's crippled body is the outward sign of a spiritual nature, denied an outlet in its inherited religion and given no workable replacement in philosophy,

²⁰Santayana, The Letters of George Santayana, pp. 9-10.

attempting to express itself in a religion foreign to his Puritan American temperament.

Oliver's physique and athleticism had been inherited from his mother. When physical maturity brought distractions and his society provided no adequate means for spiritual expression, his health declined. During his seventeenth summer his languid disposition was the cause of sending him to his father's yacht where two weeks of sea air and Jim Darnley's company revived his spirits, improved his appearance and health. During his years at Williams College, he grew physically but acquired a certain dullness and his features lost the "delicate transparent quality" of his childhood. (p. 329) A broken leg served as the turning point for him from considering athletics as a duty to the thought of exercise as a bodily necessity. Finally, finding no moral logic for the war or for his own existence, real physical deterioration began. Repeated visits to rest camp failed to restore his vigor, and Rose noted

how seedy poor Oliver himself looked in his graceless clothes! His eyes were still clear and beautiful, if a little tired, and his smile had all its old sweetness and purity: but he was growing skinny and thin, his wrists showed ugly bones and tendons; the skin was muddy and blotched; and the strands of lank sandy hair, dampened by the rain, were beginning to part in places, and show a white scalp. He would make a gaunt old man, and prematurely. He looked as if he had suffered from poverty, overwork, or prolonged hardship: he, the pet of fortune, to whom the whole world was open and who didn't know where to lay his head. (p. 572)

Only in death did his face recover "its old aspect . . . how he looked as a boy," (p. 585) when spirit and body had worked together harmoniously.

Just as Santayana had observed that death was often the fate of sensitive young men caught between the contradictory forces of the

genteel tradition and materialism in American culture, physical death is used in the novel to symbolize spirit's total inability to reach a rational harmony with matter. Jim's death is contrasted with that of Oliver and others in whom spirit dominated. Jim was dominated by bodily passions and symbolically died by drowning or by immersion in matter. The Vicar and Peter Alden, both of a spiritual nature, died in a sense by suicide, which Santayana described as the height of distraction to spirit by the Devil.²¹ Jim's father, seeing Jim's death as the expiation of his own physical nature, denied his bodily needs and fasted until his physical body wasted away. Peter sought escape from the demands of the physical world in drugs and died from an overdose. Harold Van de Weyer, Mario's American father, died young after vainly and inappropriately trying to express himself in heraldry and genealogy. James Van de Weyer's son, not characterized in the novel, had also died young. After reaching a charitable understanding of himself and the world but unable to adapt himself to its realities, Oliver died a sacrificial but unavailing death. Mario, who acknowledged "the living forces of nature" through spiritual expression in the tradition of the Catholic Church, survived.

American survivors included the Reverend Edgar Thornton, an earnest but inconsequential young man who, like Edith, produced only sentimentality. Senator Lunt, also an undeveloped character, might also be called an American Lord Jim in his Homeric philosophy of "genuine men in the genuine world," but such a philosophy "so splendid for a man of action" (p. 486) was impossible, as Oliver knew, for spiritual men like Oliver or Peter. The other American survivor is Tom Piper, the young doctor and Oliver's high school friend, who has the potential for uniting the

²¹Santayana, The Realm of Spirit, p. 194.

idealism and scientific materialism in which America might find a truly representative and worthwhile life of reason.

The lack of rational unity between mind and body is portrayed too in a series of leitmotifs depicting varying mental incapacities ranging from insanity to the lesser and more humorous inability of Mrs. Alden to establish firm grounds to support her biased opinions. Representative of a vulgarized genteel tradition, her shifting reasons were based first on moral grounds and then, as counter-arguments prevailed, to practical grounds, or vice versa as the need arose. Even she realized the foolishness of her explanation to young Oliver's question when she told him Irish-Catholic Mrs. Murphy held her child on her lap so that he would not roll twenty feet on level ground into the river. Fearing Oliver would see the fallacy, "she instantly raised the argument to a higher level, and turned from physical to moral considerations; a great resource when the facts contradict one's convictions." (p. 104) The maladjustment of Oliver's father is shown in his use of drugs. Unable to adjust physical reality and the demands of his spiritual nature, Peter sought relief by deadening his mind with drugs, an anathema to Puritan Oliver.

A more tragic image is the pattern of insanity, along with suicide the highest distraction of the Devil. Madness is emphasized in Oliver's heritage. Besides the curse of his father's murder, Nathaniel winced under the burden of his sister Julia's madness and read Dr. Bumstead's book about the "evil depths" that sane people would find in themselves if they allowed themselves to go mad. Peter found the French lecturer's outlook on insanity foreign because it was "curious natural history to him, not souls undone." (p. 56) Fearing abnormality in himself, Peter in turn sought the service of Dr. Bumstead, director of the Great Falls Asylum. Irma recognized the result of the suppression of every natural

expression of feeling in the number of mad persons in the old Puritan families and at first feared that Oliver himself would break under the burden. Later she realized that her fear was false: "He has too much self-command, too much sweet reasonableness for that [madness]" but smothered by circumstances would die. (p. 224)

Santayana points to a similarity between madness and dreams. In dreams when the body is asleep, psychic predominance over external experience is normal, but an excessive psychic predominance over external experience in waking hours results in madness. Since in dreams the psyche is withdrawn from the external world, the spirit in

that withdrawal and concentration, together with much fragmentary nonsense, . . . may develop and fancifully express its absolute impulses, building the world nearer to the heart's desire. Hence, dreams may be morally prophetic.²²

The account of Oliver's dream at Iffley is a revelation of his spiritual plight. Freed from critical judgments and moral anxieties of waking experience, his mind intuitively understood Jim's true nature and the futility of trying to fit his own spiritual vocation into either Jim's or the Vicar's mold.

Inarticulateness in spiritual persons symbolizes spirit's unsuccessful efforts to find suitable means of expression. One of the techniques used to develop characterization in the novel is the use of extended narration of the thoughts of various characters usually by Santayana, the narrator, and sometimes by the character's own speech. This variation of a soliloquy deserves study not only because the content often expressed "a lot of good things" of Santayana's own (p. 600), but as a literary device sensitively used as an expression of spirituality in the

²²Ibid., p. 5.

characters. Oliver, in whom spirituality reaches its highest degree, has found no medium into which to channel it; hence, spirit in him remains inarticulate and is revealed by the narrator. The American way of life was based on action, and Oliver learned to walk before he could talk, but his insurmountable problem "was to find something to do." (p. 77) Since practical America had veered from its religious origins and surviving genteel tradition provided no satisfactory substitute, Oliver's philosophy was always unexpressed or expressed

inarticulately, of course, as it was destined, at bottom, to remain always; because the words which his education supplied were not capable of uttering it truly. (p. 76)

Peter and Caleb were also spiritual men. Caleb had found a means of expression through his adoption of the Catholic religion, but this was a form not native or appropriate to his Calvinist heritage; hence, his speech came in gasps and wheezes which wracked his deformed body. Peter too had found no outlet in the genteel tradition, but, to Oliver's surprise, Peter had a "double character." Away from the confines of Great Falls, Peter "could cease to be silent, retiring, and perpetually ironical; he could unbosom himself." (p. 150) The Church of England, the dogma of which he interpreted only figuratively, was the channel for the Vicar's moral consciousness. Away from the pulpit he was shy and retiring. Mario, a man of lesser spirituality which he had synthesized with his physical being, was vocal and articulate, even as a youngster able to converse readily with anyone. Even the "excessive talkiness" of Mrs. Alden, which Ballowe finds out of character and stretching reality,²³ is rather, I think, part of the general motif of inarticulateness of American spirit. Spirituality in Harriet Alden, as representative of

²³Ballowe, p. 134.

a common form of the genteel tradition, is hypocrisy or, at best, self-deception, since its basis has shifted from Calvinism to materialism while still claiming the old Puritan moral standard. Her speeches reveal her position admirably, and her self-satisfaction serves as a foil to the spiritual quest of the other characters.

The third group of symbols are those of individual-society relationships. These include individual artistic expression and the cultural institutions of society. To Santayana, "Art is action which transcending the body makes the world a more congenial stimulus to the soul,"²⁴ and thus is the highest expression of reason. Both sides of American society had denied this rational fulfillment in artistic individuals--the genteel tradition by clinging to the remnants of the Calvinist philosophy and, on the other side, the growing emphasis on materialism which disclaimed an impractical artistic expression except as an indication of gentility in ladies. In the chasm between these two demands of their society had fallen the gifted young men Santayana had known at Harvard who had retreated to Europe or in death. The most pronounced such example in The Last Puritan is Harold Van de Weyer, who, having "the courage of his delicate tastes," fled to Europe "confident of personally restoring the age of Pericles" but instead futilely rebounded from his idea of being a great painter to his other two passions of genealogy and heraldry--completely irrelevant to his American roots--finally subsiding "to the happiness of collecting bookplates." (pp. 4-5) Nathaniel held the democrat's view of art: he collected pictures not because he liked them but because it was a public duty "to encourage art in a new

²⁴George Santayana, Reason in Art, Vol. IV: The Life of Reason or The Phases of Human Progress (New York, 1931), p. 15.

country." (p. 20) Nathaniel's varied collection--every kind of picture except nudities--showed that he, like Harold Van de Weyer, had not understood that true "art canalises nature," (p. 515) that a genuine American artistic expression would find its basis in American life, not in imitations of European culture.

Architecture as a symbol for the two aspects of American culture has already been mentioned: the pretentious colonial mansion with certain material comforts surreptitiously added representing the genteel tradition and the skyscraper symbolizing the American Will in material achievements. In the novel, architecture and the furnishings of houses are frequently used as indication of religious and philosophic thought.²⁵ Ballowe has pointed out the description of the general decay of Nathaniel's house as a symbol of the waning force of Puritanism in its original form and religious purpose.²⁶ Nathaniel noted the "rightness" of his summer house at Newport--the austere, somewhat worn, elegance and quietness within even if the exterior did appear smothered and dilapidated--compared to what he considered the vulgar, crowded opulence of Carolyn's house, representing the commercial material interests of the Van de Weyer family. Oliver, too, noticed the importance of "things" in the Van de Weyer home in New York, making it a kind of family museum, where furniture and ornaments were accumulated and discarded by the whim of fashion.

The false classicism of the Bumstead mansion appealed to Peter Alden as did the genteel tradition: ludicrous in itself but acceptable

²⁵This choice of symbol is perhaps influenced by Santayana's personal interest in architecture and his early ambition to be an architect.

²⁶Ballowe, p. 136.

enough if one recognized it for what it was--"an act of allegiance to a lost cause" of Puritanism--and even comfortable enough if he were permitted his own private Chinese room into which he could retreat. (p. 63) Caleb's house displayed his compromise with Puritanism. Despite his conversion to Catholicism, Caleb was an ardent American and his original home, screened by scanty-leaved elms, retained the "certain frail elegance, as if a Puritan dame daring at last to powder her thin straight hair, and to put on a little rouge," (p. 184) while the rest of the Wetherbee place was enclosed by a low brick wall within which was the monastery with the bell tower, where in imagination he watched the sailing ships of the fierce Northmen and the civilized Latins approach the American shores. Caleb, denied the solace of belief in the religious doctrine of Calvinism, sought comfort in Catholicism, which was a little native to his New England background and ancestry as Nathaniel's collection of Shakespearean drawings.

The structure of the Iffley Anglican church is used as an example for the Vicar to explain to Oliver how the rude architecture expressed the inexperienced primitive Nordic mind imperfectly grounded in the Catholic faith, yet constructed so strongly that the building had stood through the ages while the barbaric ornaments had weathered and dimmed. He questioned if the American skyscrapers would stand and serve the same purpose for a thousand years. Oliver answered that the skyscrapers were not intended to show a way for life for a thousand years and added that America had schools for that purpose, unintentionally emphasizing the chasm between the intellectual thought which was continued through the medium of the schools and the material way of life shown in big business, a separation which Oliver and most Americans did not understand and could not bridge. In contrast with the Iffley church, the cheap Gothic

style and garish newness of the furnishings of Edith's church displayed the imitative nature of her religion.

In "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy" Santayana had interpreted the American feeling for music and landscape as the last spiritual resources of a people unable to express their desired ideals in words.²⁷ He attributed the importance of music in German culture to the same inability or reluctance to ground feelings and emotion in the external world:

Now music is a means of giving form to our inner feelings without attaching them to events or objects in the world. Music is articulate, but articulate in a language which avoids, or at least veils the articulation of the world we live in; it is, therefore, the chosen art of a mind to whom the world is still foreign.²⁸

Music was one of the few expressions of spirit permitted to Oliver, and it too was stifled by convention. When he was a child, singing little German songs was one of his favorite amusements. Once when he forgot himself enough to sing loudly in church, everyone looked at him, and he never sang in church again until the Vicar's message at Iffley tempted him briefly toward the Anglican Church. Yet even then the Vicar knew that Oliver's singing talent was rebellious to training and he could sing only what he felt, as the Puritan spirit was dependent upon its own inward judgment, denying outward authority. Later as a member of the Williams glee club and at his fraternity gathering, he sang romantic foreign songs which had no bearing on his own life and expressed his emotions only as a formal, idealized poetic medium, not as a personal expression appropriate to the inner feeling of Oliver Alden.

²⁷Santayana, "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy," p. 200.

²⁸Santayana, Egotism in German Philosophy, pp. 160-161.

The Latin Catholic feeling for music differs extremely from the Nordic. Mario's voice could not match Oliver's, but he sang with ease. Moreover, Mario recognized the connection between art and nature, between body and soul. Recognition had come early when Mario's voice changed and his mother, an opera singer with a magnificent voice, chose for his "first man's lesson" a love song. (p. 411) Mario urged Oliver to let his mother, symbolizing the Catholic religious tradition, train his voice and transport his spirit out of his inward self. But to Oliver being transported out of oneself was a kind of "shirking, a mere escape and delusion," (p. 413) similar to the escape of his father by using drugs.

Although serious literary output was curtailed, Santayana cited several American men of letters who had managed to escape the genteel tradition but were ineffectual because they were unable to offer something to replace it. One of these figures was Walt Whitman, who was the subject of a conversation among Jim Darnley, Oliver, and his father. Santayana analyzed Whitman's poetry, both in style and content, as reflecting a type of primitive perception in which he viewed the world as if it were just beginning, ignoring all conventions of intellect and morals, an attitude which found the atmosphere of liberalism, transcendentalism, and democracy of his time favorable for this type of literary expression. Yet despite the affinity of his poetry to the attitudes which spawned it, Whitman was "not the spokesman for the tendencies of his country" because he was incapable of insight into men's ideals, stopping with only "sensuous sympathy" with the common man. Even the common man demands an ideality for his spokesman, however, and thus only foreigners regarded him as representative of Americans because they interpreted his writing as the grotesque expression of a young

race.²⁹ To Jim Darnley's enthusiastic appraisal of Whitman as "the real, the best, the only American poet . . . the only one truly American," (p. 179) Peter responded that Whitman was not read by Americans, only Englishmen.

The areas of knowledge and school systems are employed as examples of the weakness of the genteel tradition and as the accepted compromises of English society as means of reconciling spirit to matter. Santayana had assessed the British character as having a trait of pretense or role-playing in order to maintain a semblance of a world in which his spirit could find peace--in Peter's words, England "exists by a living compromise between incompatible tendencies." (p. 313) Peter recognized this quality in the English school system, much like the Church of England; he deduced that young men turned out by these institutions, despite exposure to pedagogues who were frequently ignorant and uncouth, were themselves models of breeding and knowledge because both "School and Chapel . . . lovely faded religion and lovely faded learning" were but play of the imagination through which they learned honor, liberty, fidelity, and courage. (p. 298) Thus the faggings, the etiquette about clothes, and other Etonian practices that Oliver considered foolish were to Peter traditions consciously maintained by the English as illusions to achieve the same effects as the earlier and more sincere (if, as Peter thought, self-deceived) religious practices which had been established in the belief that there was a "Jacob's ladder" and moral order for the universe on which one could climb to Heaven. Some of this attitude is carried over to the importance of sports in English and

²⁹Santayana, "The Poetry of Barbarism," p. 184.

American schools.

American schools, both the high school at Great Falls and Groton, followed the American pattern of life by placing great emphasis on modern, scientific buildings and equipment, while preserving in teaching the vestiges of Calvinistic morality and philosophy. The Puritan disdain for human weaknesses and the transcendental reverence for nature and the infallibility of one's own spirit are shown in Oliver's preference in school subjects. On the "sunny side" of knowledge he placed geography, astronomy, and natural history and, to some extent, mathematics, which at least didn't suffer from the taint of human illusions as did languages and history.

The symbol of physical isolation signified the individual's inability to relate successfully to his society, one aspect of the spirit's more comprehensive denial of the external world. Like the other attempts of the genteel tradition to preserve a second-hand morality and an outmoded philosophy, the efforts of the characters to isolate themselves against the growing materialism of the times and the other intrusions upon the inner self are humorously satirized. Nathaniel, who knew his Puritan ancestors had chosen "distance to avoid contagion," (p. 24) kept himself from present contagion by keeping to the confines of his own house, most frequently in his room, shutting out the world by drawing the blinds, and emerging only when duty in the form of church or family funerals prevailed. Even the church pews were enclosed to assure the privacy of worship demanded. If one could not shut out the world completely, the need for privacy could be achieved at times by merging into the background of conventional propriety, against which one would not be noticed. A proper Bostonian, for example, would never scurry across a street but cross only at the correct crossing with other pedestrians in

hopes of being unobserved for

even if you were doing nothing morally wrong, to be unobserved was always reassuring. It restored to you half of that negative blessedness which you would have enjoyed if you had been nonexistent. (p. 32)

Santayana's satire is written with a gentility to match its subject. Characters become objects of ridicule through gently humorous sarcasm. The self-imposed isolation of Harriet Alden, like that of Nathaniel's, is in this vein. The Bumstead's decaying mansion, later restored by Peter's wealth inherited from his father, was set "on the very summit of High Bluff" in Great Falls, Connecticut. (p. 67) No one would have thought of entering another's room. In fact, in the grandmother's house before Harriet's mother had married, each of the family lived in her respective room, never exchanging a word or having a meal in common. Harriet herself never liked to have her spare room occupied because it meant a closed door, and a closed door indicated the physical processes of sleep or the mysteries of the toilet. Open doors did not of course signify intimacy, for "the threshold was moral barrier stronger than any bolt; and nobody was thought capable of being so much as tempted to pry into another's privacy." (p. 493) But a closed door awakened sinister suggestions to Mrs. Alden's mind:

Her conventional social mind said: 'I mustn't disturb that person,' but her instinctive and dreaming mind said: 'What if that person should burst out and pounce upon me?' (p. 493)

Isolation becomes tragic in the plight of the sensitive and spiritual characters who understand the inadequacy of their heritage but are unable to substitute a successful way of living. Peter sought refuge in his constant voyages while retaining home and marriage to Harriet as a neglected port. Such a life, though, was, as Irma correctly understood it, an abdication of his rights and an avoidance of duties--"treason to

life." (p. 217) He could neither feel at home in America nor in any other country. Equally tragic is the life of Caleb Wetherbee, who renounced the Puritan religion of his fathers but accepted another supernatural belief--Catholicism. The old Weatherbee mansion too was set on a hill overlooking the sea, and Caleb had enclosed his monastery with a brick wall. He reserved the topmost loggia of the bell tower as his workshop from which to view the Atlantic and dream of past history and "manana." Winters were spent in Boston. Caleb's ties with Puritanism had not been severed completely. He had merely substituted a different religious dogma while maintaining a core of Calvinistic inwardness.

Oliver made every attempt to be meaningfully integrated into his society but failed. The purity of his spirit condemned alike materialistic big business and a fading philosophy. He found "no Jesus to follow" except his own spirit. His isolation was for the most part a social one. He felt his aloneness and tried to form friendships, attempting to find in each a way to relate successfully to the external world. From Jim he sought the bodily warmth lacking in his own makeup; from Mario, the worldly ease denied Oliver; and from the Vicar, a workable illusion between reality and an ideal.

The separation of spirit and matter, of mind and body, of individual and society is frequently indicated by a metaphor of the theater. Even in high school Oliver saw physical and social life as a drama that most people forgot was not real, a stage accepted as the "bedrock of nature." (p. 227) But Oliver could not accept this "moral melodrama invented by the frightened dreams of mankind." (p. 227) A "secret drama" was always being played in his mind, a life of spirit which "made his daily routine somewhat perfunctory." (p. 379) Finally, Rose's refusal of his proposal seemed a solution by which Oliver's spirit was released

from the constraint of playing a role in the world. He was free to leave the theater for his true life, to fall back to his deeper self.

The theatrical image, in addition to being particularly appropriate as a symbol of the subjective tendency of the transcendental mind, also is effective in creating a historical perspective for religion and philosophy. Related to the theatrical imagery is the dramatic structure of the novel. The division of the book into five acts has been criticized, and perhaps justly, by James Ballowe as a convenience for the amateur novelist who required guidelines for his miscellaneous materials. The Prologue and Epilogue he regards as "attempts to increase the credibility of the events by inventing a tale of how the novel came into being" but which fail "to integrate the events and meaning, as, for instance, the 'Epilogue' in Moby Dick does." These "mechanical inventions" along with other dramatic elements by "lack of spontaneity and flexibility [do] not further the illusion of truth necessary for a successful work of art."³⁰ Whether or not the dramatic structure can be considered successful as a literary technique, to consider it only as a means of organizing material and explain intent is inadequate, for such an evaluation fails to comprehend the structural-logical relationship of the novel. Santayana's use of prologue and epilogue are comparable, at least in intent, to similar devices in literary creations as old as Job, through classical tragedies, Goethe's Faust, to Moby Dick--at once setting up a reasonable scene in which the surface story can be played and at the same time creating a sense of the cosmic background and historic perspective in which the story of the human race is enacted. Like Goethe's Prologue in Heaven and the Himmelfahrt, discussed by Oliver and

³⁰Ballowe, pp. 192-193.

Caleb in The Last Puritan, these devices are adapted to the philosophical content of the story. Metaphorically and structurally, the theatrical devices serve to dramatize the dilemma of spirit as a transcendent witness in a physical world.

Consideration of the symbols in the novel show that they are not unique. They are, instead, the external phenomena to which the collective perception of mankind has attached a common moral significance now blurred by scientific knowledge in a modern world. Others are practices which have arisen from a national temperament which has either never understood or has lost sight of the original feeling which gave birth to the practices. To these blurred and distorted images Santayana has reattached symbolic spiritual and emotional values by which man has always attempted to find spiritual ideals in a physical world.

"In nature, as in a book, we can discover only such thoughts as we are capable of framing." (The Realm of Spirit, p. 39)

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

Religion and philosophy are man's attempts to understand his existence and to make it meaningful, to reconcile his spiritual nature with his physical reality. George Santayana's novel, The Last Puritan, is a microcosm of modern philosophical and religious life in Western civilization at a stage of moral history in which the supernatural basis of religion is no longer retained but has not been replaced by a satisfactory natural philosophy. The Protestant Nordic races, inheritors of a heightened spiritual nature undisciplined by a long civilized history or by an external religious authority, had more rapidly and more drastically shed the authority of religious dogma than had the Catholic Latin races. Religious belief had turned into skepticism and gradually into philosophical thought which emphasized the consciousness of self and rejection of the natural world. National characteristics and geographical and political circumstances had more or less determined the direction of this Protestant evolution. German religion evolved into a subjective philosophy and a national egotism. England had made a conscious compromise between the authority of the inner man and external reality through the Church of England. A more tragic situation developed in America. Inheriting an extreme Calvinist philosophy and confronted with a materialist way of life necessary in a frontier nation, American

philosophical thought subsided into a stale "genteel tradition," wholly inadequate for sensitive and intelligent men. These individuals, so far unable to replace the genteel tradition with a workable philosophy, could only submerge themselves in business activities, live in Europe, or die. Such was the destiny of Oliver Alden.

The more civilized Catholic tradition, because of discipline and faith in an external authority, was less eroded but not immune to the forces of modernism as evidenced by the modern Catholic's attempts to retain the structure of his church without the faith on which it was constructed.

Santayana had repeatedly warned--the English, the American, and the Catholic--that it was impossible to maintain a half-way station on the descent from supernaturalism to skepticism and reliance on inward authority of spirit. His own philosophy called for a life of reason, a balance of spirit and matter, based on natural ideals instead of religious fictions. Santayana had spelled out his ideal and had urged it in many instances, but the philosophy of the novel is more enigmatic or perhaps more resigned to the slow evolution of man's religious and philosophic history. Santayana, as narrator, observed the failure of the Protestant cultures; nor did he see the maturation of his ideal in Mario's Catholicism and could only conclude:

Your modernism sucks in all the sap of the past, like the modernism of the new Italy; and any future worth having will spring from men like you, not from weedy intellectuals or self-inhibited puritans. Fortune will never smile on those who disown the living forces of nature. You can well afford to let an old philosopher here and there anticipate death and live as much as possible in eternity. The truth cannot triumph before. Perhaps, while life lasts, in order to reconcile mankind with reality, fiction in some directions may be more needful than truth.
(p. 600)

Yet the harmony of matter and spirit inherent in the Catholic tradition promised a foundation for a rational philosophy not evident in the

Protestant heritage.

A remarkable correlation between literary technique and content, between symbol and moral meaning is found in The Last Puritan. The structure of the novel is allegorical with each person symbolizing a direction and a level of spirituality that Christianity, tempered by race and history, has taken in its effort "to reconcile mankind with reality." Within the allegory Santayana has employed the symbols of Christian history subject to his individual interpretation. Despite his belief that Catholicism offered a reasonable balance between spirit and matter, Santayana was not without sympathy for the "sensitive Nordics" who at some time discover all great truths, and Oliver Alden is presented as a Christ-like figure but who, unlike the historical Christ, is unable to live steadily in the light of the eternal. Christ's temptations of the Flesh, the World, and the Devil are translated symbolically into distractions to the spirit--the fleshly distractions of nutrition and reproduction, worldly duties and obligations, and the ultimate distraction of the Devil in which spirit asserts its omnipotence over physical reality. Oliver as ultimate Puritan at last achieves the highest reaches of his spiritual nature, a moment of Charity in which he understands the relativity of his standards, Puritanism condemning itself.

Like the three distractions which form the framework of the novel, all of the imagery points to the dichotomous nature of man as a physical and spiritual being and to the continuous struggle between spirit and matter reflected in the conflicts of individual's mind and body and in his relationships with society. The philosophic basis of all metaphor is emphasized in Santayana's choice of physical images and experiences to which the collective consciousness of mankind has attached moral connotations, perhaps now grown vague except in poetic minds which can

again clarify the symbolic meaning.

Most critics and probably most readers have agreed that The Last Puritan cannot be judged by the usual criteria for modern novels. Some may apply to it the assessment of Richard Chase of James's The Wings of the Dove that

one is not recompensed by the allegory for the vexation of finding a novel which is so attenuated and prolix. One reads it, that is, stubbornly as a novel.¹

But if one can resist comparison and judge the book by the author's own standards of adapting form to content, his novel is truly a work of art and reason.

¹Richard Chase, The American Novel and Its Tradition (New York, 1957), p. 137.

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Master of Arts

Thesis: THE RELATIONSHIP OF FORM AND CONTENT IN GEORGE SANTAYANA'S THE LAST PURITAN

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