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Architectural Anxiety: The Implications of Italian Architecture in the Short Fiction of Henry James

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by
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'Close Reading' Architecture

> I had already been twice to the [Milan] Cathedral. There, reared for the action of the sun, you find a vast marble world. The solid whiteness lies in mighty slabs along the iridescent slopes of nave and transept…it leaps and climbs and shoots and attacks the unsheltered blue with a keen and joyous incision. It meets the pitiless sun with a more than equal glow; the day falters, declines, expires, but the marble shine forever, unmelted and unintermittent…with confounding frequency, too, on some uttermost point of a pinnacle, its plastic force explodes into satisfied rest in some perfect flower of a figure.[1]

Few passages better convey the impact of Italian architecture on Henry James than the above selection from his "Travelling Companions," written after the author's first independent journey to Italy in 1870. The vivid imagery and energy in the description fully explicate James's irrepressible elation, while the image of the spires piercing the sky indicates his fascination with the church's aesthetic qualities. Each line of this interaction is meticulously thought out, the imagery carefully crafted and strongly evocative—all elements indicative of architecture's impact on the author's sensibilities. James incorporates a profusion of architectural details in his stories, and the attributes that he chooses to emphasize draw out subtle themes in his texts. His descriptions of Italian structures, including extant buildings, ruins, and sculpture, have the power to reveal major themes and elucidate character.

James visited Italy annually for almost forty years, between 1869 and 1909, but the period that concerns this project is his early introduction to the Continent, from 1869-

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[1] Henry James, "The Last of the Valerii," in *The Last of the Valerii, Master Eustace, The Romance of Certain Old Clothes, and Other Tales* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1923), 7.

1878. Although James and his family spent a good deal of time in Europe (they moved between Switzerland, Paris, and London between 1855 and 1858,) James didn't travel there himself until he was twenty-six. James's introduction to Italy came in 1869, when he traveled from England to Florence, Rome, and Venice, insisting that the excursion was necessary for his health and well-being. His first stay in Rome inspired him greatly, and in a letter to his brother William, he wrote, "at last—for the first time—I live! It beats everything…it makes Venice-Florence-Oxford-London seem little cities of pasteboard. I went reeling and moaning thro' the streets in a fever of enjoyment."[2] James returned to Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1870, and *The Atlantic* published "Travelling Companions" soon after. James then departed for Italy in 1872 and stayed in Europe until 1874—it was during this spell that he wrote "The Last of the Valerii" (among others.) Once again James did not stay long in the United States, sailing for Paris in 1875. James didn't return to Italy until the end of 1877, settling in Rome where he spent "the whole of the seven weeks he meant to give to Italy."[3] This brief stay in Rome produced "Daisy Miller," published by *Cornhill Magazine* in 1878.

James uses architecture to evoke significance in two distinct ways. In the first, scenes that occur within significant architectural sites deserve attention, even if the author doesn't mention the architectural details themselves. The architectural context (often its historical associations) reveals something about the scene. An example of this can be found in my analysis of "Daisy Miller," as an interpretation of the Colosseum's Christian

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[2] Henry James, "Letter to William James, October 30, 1869," from *The Letters of Henry James*, ed. by Percy Lubbock (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), 20-21.
[3] Henry James, "Letter to Grace Norton, December 15, 1877," from *The Letters of Henry James*, ed. by Percy Lubbock (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), 55.

history brings the climactic encounter at the amphitheater into new light. Although James does not offer minute descriptions of the edifice as he does for other structures, the history of the amphitheater offers a unique conception of Daisy's sacrifice. This project will therefore include scenes that occur within notable structures as a means of discerning major themes and motifs.

In the second practice, James's illustration of a structure (often conveyed through the eyes of a narrator or protagonist) proffers minute details that denote a fuller understanding of a character or theme. Some examples of these features include the juxtaposition between plant life and stone within an ancient structure, the construction's interaction with light, or the author's attention to one architectural element in particular. Often an examination into the seemingly insignificant details that James includes leads to a completely different conception of the scene: this occurred at several points during the composition of this project, where I found myself forming connections that I hadn't even considered before researching a particular structural component or word. One example of this occurred during my analysis of "The Last of the Valerii," where further investigation into the structure that housed the ancient Juno statue emphasized qualities significant for a conception of her role in the story. Furthermore, in several scenes, themes described in relation to the architecture surrounding James's protagonists also applied to the story as a whole—for instance, the layering of material atop the Palatine Hill in "Daisy Miller" closely recalls James's complex arrangement of Daisy's character. This method of analysis has the potential to reveal a good deal about James's texts, as his attention to detail is oftentimes exhaustive.

Extensive scholarship exists on James's relationship with the visual, in particular paintings, which often hold a significant role in his texts. James himself wrote a considerable amount about art, and as early at 1868 the *North American Review* published his criticism. James was twenty-five.[4] He was also very friendly with John Singer Sargent, openly admired the works of Turner, Tintoretto, Michelangelo, Delacroix, and Titian, and from time to time would sketch or draw, an affinity remaining from his brief affair with landscape painting under the direction of William Morris Hunt.[5] There are several thorough books concerning James's relationship with the visual, including Kendall Johnson's *Henry James and the Visual* as well as Viola Hopkins Winner's *Henry James and the Visual Arts*, the latter used several times in this project.

Leon Edel's "Henry James as an Art Critic" not only offers a thorough investigation into James's attraction to paintings and sculpture, but also provides some of the only information concerning James's architectural background. James's knowledge of architecture is difficult to surmise, and yet his depiction of architectural spaces and descriptive terms indicates an understanding beyond the basics of simple appreciation. James himself indicates his grounding in architectural history when he alludes to the historical background behind a site, as often the circumstances he refers to are more complex and involved than casual knowledge would allow.

In her article "Henry James and Italy," Rosella Mamoli Zorzi discusses the art of Italy that James includes in his story, suggesting that his attraction in part resulted from

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[4] For a full collection of his art criticism, see: Henry James, *The Painter's Eye: Notes and Essays on the Pictorial Arts.*

[5] Henry James, *The Painter's Eye: Notes and Essays on the Pictorial Arts,* ed. John L. Sweeney (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 5.
James's *Italian Hours* includes many descriptions and informal judgments of these works, in particular paintings by Tintoretto, Michelangelo, and Titian.

the inspiration that the country's visual history offered him. At the end of her first section, Zorzi observes, "Paintings allow plots to develop [and] character to be defined."[6] Many scholars have addressed this notion, especially in reference to the Italian masters that James appreciated so fully.[7] This project attempts to make a similar statement about the architecture that James chooses to include in his stories. In contrast to painting, very little scholarship exists that discusses Italian architecture as a narrative function in James's literature. Although scholars have addressed James's architectural preferences and his grounding in architectural theory, to my knowledge there is minimal scholarship concerning a close reading of the structural inclusions from James's stories set in Italy.[8] The most common discussion of architecture in relation to James is metaphorical, often referencing his famous "house of fiction" from the preface to *Portrait of a Lady.*

The organization of this project, though not chronological, illuminates an evolution in James's use of architecture and erected objects. The first chapter investigates "The Last of the Valerii." The story, written while James was living in Rome, addresses the relationship between past and present in the city. James's protagonist, the count Marco Valerio, is completely seduced by the marble figure of an ancient Juno that his young wife unearths despite his wary protestations. The first section of the chapter discusses sculpture rather than architecture, a conscious decision that

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[6] Rosella Mamoli Zorzi, "Henry James and Italy," in *A Companion to Henry James*, ed. by Greg W. Zacharias (West Sussex: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2008), 437.
[7] For an in-depth account of James's use of Italian Renaissance art, see: Nelly Valtat-Comet, "Tracing the Venetian Masters in Henry James," in *Tracing Henry James,* ed. Melanie H. Ross and Greg W. Zacharias (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), 185-201.
[8] For more information on James's architectural preferences and his relation to John Ruskin, see: Victoria Hopkins Winner, *Henry James and the Visual Arts* (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1970), 31-44.

resulted from my desire to fully convey James's conception of the power of antiquity in Rome. The Juno represents a potent example of the ancient world's impact on modern individuals, and as the story centers on the sculpture's discovery, I felt it was important to address what James sees as the strangely fluid interrelation between past and present. I also attend to the danger that the author considers implicit for a city living in such close proximity to the remnants of its ancient conception.

The second chapter considers James's "Travelling Companions," set in Venice. My analysis focuses on the juxtapositions evident throughout James's story. I examine the contrasting architectural details that James includes as a means of unraveling the narrator's (and the author's) conception of Italy, as the text documents the first time in Italy for both. This chapter also includes a moral dimension, complicating the relationship established in chapter one, as the narrator is not only affected by the architecture, but now agonizes over his purely aesthetic appreciation of the Basilica San Marco.

The third and final chapter discusses "Daisy Miller," perhaps the author's most famous short story. "Daisy Miller" is the latest of the three works, as James wrote it after a brief sojourn in Italy in the last months of 1878. James's use of architecture in this text has developed to a greater extent, as he molds the architectural setting until it mirrors his characters' emotional drama and development. Small details in his portraits of the Colosseum and the Palace of the Caesars aid in the interpretation of character, especially in relation to his obscure protagonist, Daisy. By the time of "Daisy Miller," James does more than just communicate architecture's power over his protagonists: he uses it to construct the mental and moral qualities implicit to Daisy's identity.

This project attempts a close reading of architectural description within a literary text in order to reach clarity of theme and character. I've found that attention to James's narrative treatment of structures can reveal new significances and illuminate a story's focus. All three texts concern an American's encounter with the power of Italian constructions, while James's depiction of architecture in these stories conveys his own anxiety of experience as well as his conception of a culture so closely tied to its past. A close reading of James's multivalent structural descriptions therefore untangles his impression of the relation between ancient constructions and the modern man.

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Living in Ruins: Roman Architecture and the Modern Man in "The Last of the Valerii" by Henry James

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> We found the Count standing before the resurgent goddess in fixed contemplation, with folded arms…he raised [the wine] mechanically to his own [lips]; then suddenly he stopped, held it a moment aloft, and poured it out slowly and solemnly at the feet of the Juno.
> "Why, it's a libation!" I cried. He made no answer and walked slowly away. [9]

Characters in James's story "The Last of the Valerii" (1874) are strongly drawn to the architecture and sculpture of antiquity: for Valerio, James's protagonist, the statues on his villa grounds have a distinct magnetism. The count initially shows very little interest in the sculptures and artifacts on his property, although his young American wife, Martha, is intent on unearthing the relics—at least partially. Martha values the "sacred green mould of the ages" that grows on the interred sculptures, and insists that it remain as evidence of the ancient objects' age.[10] Valerio, however, makes no claims about what the statues' state should be: instead, he leaves them alone, but not before asserting his anxiety at her desire to dig up the remnants of his ancestral past. When the Count first encounters the ancient statue of Juno that his wife exhumes from the overgrown lawn of his paternal villa, he is instantly affected by its presence and feels the immediate need to worship her as his pagan forefathers would have. Thus begins Valerio's downward spiral

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[9] Henry James, "The Last of the Valerii," in *The Last of the Valerii, Master Eustace, The Romance of Certain Old Clothes, and Other Tales* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1923), 18.
[10] James, 5.

into idolatrous tendencies, a fever that leads him to a new consideration of his relics and the ancient temple of the Pantheon.

In this story, James explores the power of antiquity in Rome. He seems to suggest two distinct reactions to the influence of the city's ancient past. In Martha and the narrator, James presents the potential for antiquity to spark imagination: the relics that Martha unearths serve as a concrete reminder of the past, a physical artifact that represents a tangible manifestation of history. Ancient objects are valuable not only in an abstract sense as a result of their age, but also as they present the curious observer with a piece of the past, something to base their observation in. This sharpens the image of antiquity, pulling it from an inaccessible, intangible entity towards a substantial, tangible existence in the present day. However, the distinctly negative impact that the Juno has on Valerio (he begins to ignore his living wife in favor of the cold, marble image) suggests that James considers this close proximity between Rome's past and present dangerous: Valerio becomes so absorbed into the Juno (a representation of his ancestral history) that he forgets the present. James therefore presents the reader with a complex two-pronged image of the power of antiquities in Rome.

James's first-person narrator holds a powerful position in the story, as the reader witnesses Valerio's transformation through his eyes. As Martha's godfather, the narrator has a personal interest in the Count's fate, and his Protestant American background colors his narrative. All of the visual descriptions of architecture and sculpture come from him, and as such the reader witnesses the events of the story and the power of antiquity through his 'lens.' His subjectivity shows through at several points in the story, in particular in reference to Martha's desire to convert to Catholicism ("Valerio had the

good taste to demand no such sacrifice") and the Count's madness, which he regards with a sort of morbid fascination.[11] The narrator's viewpoint therefore conveys the degree to which antiquity can be dangerous in Rome, as the reader witnesses Valerio's religious regression and mental upheaval through the eyes of the first-person narrator. Valerio's descriptions of the Juno are few and far between, (after he first 'meets' her, he doesn't verbally refer to her at any point in the story) so the reader is reliant on the narrator's physical descriptions of the sculpture in order to ascertain why the Juno captivates Valerio so fully. The narrator and James himself share many similarities, and yet even without reading the narrator as a foil for the author, the focus of the text remains the same: his of Valerio's seduction conveys James's fascination with the power of antiquity.

Martha and the narrator value Rome's history in a manner distinct from Valerio—they see the past as romantic inspiration, and insist on its preservation. They also possess similar notions about the proper interaction with and presentation of the relics found at the Villa Valerio. The villa and the "disinterred fragments of sculptures"[12] on its grounds captivate their interests, and yet they have no desire to remove them from their "natural" contexts. Martha has a "high appreciation of antiquity," a statement that causes the narrator to note that his goddaughter "was quite of my way of thinking."[13] This assertion links their appreciation of ancient objects.

The narrator says outright that he has "a painter's passion for the place," a claim that indicates the artistic and aesthetic pleasure that he gains from his interaction with the

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[11] James, 5. After he discovers Valerio's veneration of the ancient gods, the narrator says, "I was startled and shocked, but I was also amused and comforted. The count had suddenly become for me a delightfully curious phenomenon…" (James, 28).
[12] James, 9.
[13] James, 8.

ruins. Part of this aesthetic pleasure results from the remnants of history that remain on the architecture and sculpture on the Villa Valerio's estate (Fig. 1.1). Speaking on the countess's desire to reclaim the landscape from its overgrowth of weeds and plants, he states, "I begged that the hand of improvement might be lightly laid on it, for as an unscrupulous old painter of ruins and relics, with an eye to 'subjects,' I preferred that crumbling things should be allowed to crumble at their ease." The narrator receives visual stimulation from the image of the villa's deterioration, and the tangible signs of the object's age are part of what he values about the villa. His descriptions of the "tangled shrub and twisted trees" around the place are syntactically linked to his illustration of a "moss-coated vase" and a "mouldy sarcophagus," a connection that indicates the romantic image that results from the crusted-over antiquities. The narrator emphasizes this connection when he declares, "though there were many other villas more pretentious and splendid, none seemed to me more exquisitely romantic, more haunted by ghosts of the past."[14] For James's narrator, the image of the ancient, cracked sculpture emerging partially from the ground, yet still connected to it, is worthy of artistry.

Likewise, Martha places value on the elements of sculpture that evidence its age and history: she places the substantiation of age, such as the moss and dirt that cover the antiquities, in high regard. For example, when the narrator first arrives at the villa he comes upon Valerio's countess, who is beside herself at the thought that her hired workers might displace and attempt to clean a sarcophagus that was recently unearthed on her property. The narrator notes the "air of amusing horror" with which the countess describes the scene—"she had found them scraping the sarcophagus in the great ilex-

[14] Ibid.

walk; divesting it of its mossy coat, disincrusting it of its sacred green mould of the ages!…It was the rusty complexion of his patrimonial marbles that she most prized."[15] Here, the countess cherishes the sarcophagus because of its connection to a past generation and period, but it is significant to note that it isn't her own past that she values so highly. The artifacts draw Martha's attention as a result of their aesthetic appeal and what they add to her image of 'quaint' Rome.

Valerio himself adds to Martha's image, as the story suggests that she values Valerio's personal and familial history. The narrator cements Martha's idyllic image of her relationship with the count when he describes their intimate moments. He states, "their life was a childlike interchange of caresses, as candid and natural as those of a shepherd and shepherdess in a bucolic poem." Martha herself contributes to this fantasy when she dotes on Valerio, filling his glass from "an old rusty red amphora,"[16] a drinking vessel used in ancient Rome. In the eyes of the narrator, Valerio himself enters into the landscape of her imagination. After their wedding, he declares that he believes Martha married the Count "because he was like a statue of the Decadence."[17] This statement, while somewhat nonsensical, is strongly reminiscent of the narrator's descriptions of Valerio's countenance.

Valerio's resemblance to the relics on his grounds is part of Martha's attraction to him—with his "statuesque" qualities, he adds to the 'landscape' or fantasy that she creates. He fascinates her as a result of his tangible resemblance to his past. In his text, James continually describes Valerio in terms that liken him to the relics that surround

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[15] James, 5.
[16] James, 9.
[17] James, 8.

him. Valerio embodies qualities found in the evidence of his ancient past, the statues, and yet he is a living part of the modern day. If the statues found at his villa represent antiquity for the count, then in a sense, in his resemblance to them he becomes an antiquity. Evidence of Valerio's statue-like physiognomy can be found in the narrator's physical descriptions of the count, where he is said to possess a "glowing" complexion and a simultaneously static visage: "his complexion was of a deep glowing brown, which no emotion would alter, and his large lucid eyes seemed to stare at you like a pair of polished agates."[18] Even the last portion of this line, which compares Valerio's eyes to burnished stones, suggests that the Count possesses qualities similar to those of the statues that Martha values so highly. Martha herself is fascinated by this quality of the count: the narrator mentions that "she would sit and brush the flies from him while he lay statuesquely snoring, and, if I ventured near him, would place her finger on her lips and whisper that she thought her husband was as handsome asleep as awake."[19]

Martha's interest in the count results from her awareness of his ancestry and legacy. Valerio is living proof of his family's history, the bloodline that she is now a part of. The narrator suggests that Valerio and his villa possess qualities that appeal to Martha's imagination. While his body and self are rooted in the present, his ancestral ties are perceptible in his statuesque physical features and the resulting descriptive link between himself and the effigies of his predecessors. Valerio is a living version of the statues that she values so highly—their worth in part results from the extent to which they evidence her new ties to the past. She binds herself to him through marriage and in so doing appropriates his cultural history. The count is therefore decisively coupled with the

[18] James, 4.
[19] James, 10.

grandeur of Rome's ancient past, but a past that occurred within the space of the villa that Martha invests so much time in. In a sense, Valerio serves a purpose similar to his inherited sculpture: the narrator notes that the statues at the Villa Valerio are evocative because they can "speak" and "tell…stony secrets" of times gone by.[20] Martha values him in part because he awakens her imagination, evoking images of a time gone by, in a manner much like the molded-over busts in the garden. The narrator cements her conception of Valerio when he watches them interact for the first time. Sighing, he remarks, "she was desperately in love with him, and not only her heart, but her imagination, was touched."[21]

For Martha, antiquity has the power to evoke compelling imagery of the past. In contrast, for Valerio the power of antiquity is so potent as to be dangerous for his modern self: the Juno enraptures him so fully that he forgets his present incarnation and begins to worship her as a pagan idol. This seduction does not come completely as a surprise to the count: when Martha begins to unearth the statuary, the narrator notes that Valerio seemed "not only indifferent" but "even unfriendly" to the scheme. Valerio's anxiety seems to result from the "strange influences" left behind on his grounds, and yet he implies at several points that Martha and the narrator will be unharmed by the influences of the relics. He states, "If you can't believe in them, don't disturb them…They don't touch you, doubtless, who come of another race. But me they touch often, in the whisper of the leaves and the odour of the mouldy soil and the blank eyes of the old statues."[22] In this

[20] James, 9.
[21] James, 3.
[22] James, 13.

line Valerio asserts that the dangerous sway of the relics will be his burden and his alone: "Don't dig up any more, or I won't answer for my wits!"[23]

The Juno ensnares both the narrator and Valerio as a result of her beauty, though only Valerio goes so far as to worship her (Fig. 1.2). Her feminine beauty is a quality unique to this sculpture. The other sculptures in the garden are distinctly unlovely, and their genders seem almost irrelevant to the narrator, who often neglects to provide the reader with the distinction. Furthermore, the statues that poke through the earth all over the villa grounds are often referred to in groups, without any distinguishing qualities. For example, when the narrator moves about the estate with his goddaughter, he describes the "grim old Romans who could so ill afford to become more meagre-visaged." This line does not differentiate between individual sculptures, but notes the imperfect, unappealing images of the statues' faces. In contrast, the Juno is immediately described as "shapely," in reference to her dislodged hand.[24] The narrator also notes that the Juno is "beautiful enough" to make his goddaughter "jealous," although the full weight of this implication isn't clear until they return to see the count standing motionless before the statue.[25] Finally, the Juno is distinctly "a woman," whereas the gender of the other sculptures at the villa is never a detail that the narrator considers important enough to note.

The "disinterred fragments of sculpture" found all over Valerio's estate have little affect on the Count before his wife insists on the Juno's arousal.[26] This implies that part of the Juno's appeal is in her completeness: despite her broken hand, her beauty is intact, unlike that of the other sculptures. The narrator describes her "finished beauty," which

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[23] James, 14.
[24] James, 8.
[25] James, 17.
[26] James, 9.

gives her "an almost human look." Her completeness is so certain that only a quick glance from the narrator reveals "a majestic marble image," a full effigy with the potential to immediately evoke his awe.[27] The narrator's earlier descriptions of other statues on the grounds indicate that their defects refuse them the honor of distinction, either of gender or of name.

The "namelessness" of certain statues seems to result from their "noseless heads" and "rough-hewn" artistry, two descriptions that distinctly separate them from the Juno (Fig 1.3).[28] James also describes these busts as "disfeatured," a statement that evokes an image of an unattributed, characterless face, distinct from the Juno's visage, with its stony eyes that seem to "wonder back at" her admirers. In this sense, her unbroken countenance also lends itself to her animation: her physical features are intact, adding to her beauty, and the narrator's reaction to her unharmed expression indicates a life-like quality that is absent from the other statues on the villa grounds.

Valerio himself never speaks about the Juno's affect on him or gives a description of her figure: instead, the narrator is the sole provider of her captivating qualities. The goddess's impact on Valerio is evident through his subsequent actions, and yet it must be said that the narrator controls the reader's understanding of the relationship between the count and the Juno. The narrator's descriptions of the Juno indicate why she enthralls Valerio so fully, and he is a necessary lens for the reader here, as the he is the only one present when the excavators lift the Juno out of the ground. Valerio arrives at the disinterment as a result of a dream—a reverie with some degree of import, as he discusses the Juno only in reference to this vision. Excitedly, he describes, "my dream

[27] James, 16.
[28] James, 9.

was right, then…that they had found a wonderful Juno, and that she rose and came and laid her marble hand on mine."[29] The Juno's animation in Valerio's dream aligns with the narrator's description of her figure as strangely vivified. As such, it is possible to use the narrator's account of the Juno's physical qualities to determine what makes her particularly affecting for Valerio.

The Juno instantly ensnares Valerio, perhaps as a result of her singular animation. The other statues on the villa grounds possess a simple type of vivacity: the narrator gives them personalities, calling them "grim old Romans," and yet he continues to think of them as "things" that occupy the gardens.[30] In contrast, as soon as the Juno is lifted from the earth the narrator anthropomorphizes her. James writes, "her finished beauty gave her an almost human look," building on this assertion with a description of her physical features: her "implacably grave" mouth indicates that the narrator senses a character or personality from her stony expression. The Juno's somatic traits are just that—her features are specific and defined enough that she seems to possess a disposition, a "certain personal expression." The narrator notes that "her mouth was implacably grave," and she seems poised to break out into motion: "the arm from which the…hand had been broken hung at her side with the most queenly majesty."[31]

The Juno's interaction with light serves to distance her more fully from the other pieces of sculpture that Valerio encounters on the grounds of his paternal villa. In contrast to the other sculptures at the Villa Valerio, which reside in the dim shadows of the villa, the Juno immediately interacts with bright sunlight. This is unique, as the

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[29] James, 17.
[30] James, 8-9.
[31] James, 16.

fragmented busts and effigies throughout the garden are often described in the context of shade. The broken pieces of statue live primarily within the "old ilex walk" in the villa's garden, a place described by the narrator as a "dusky vista" in "perpetual twilight."[32] This state of constant shadow and partial obscurity, when compared to the Juno's immediate interaction with bright light as soon as she's unearthed, is indicative of the different states that the sculptures inhabit. The fragments of sculpture, still partially held by the ground, remain distant from the modern day, a separation that results from their partial interment as well as their position within the obscure half-light. The narrator describes them at the time of day that hovers between light and dark: they are both illuminated and remain in shadow. Likewise, they are partially included in modernity, yet still partially buried in the ground, away from modern eyes and conceptions.

In contrast, light animates the Juno in a way that at once indicates her power in Valerio's present, and yet also emphasizes her otherworldly qualities. The Juno's interaction with light is part of what attracts the narrator to her, and he takes pains to describe the goddess in terms unique from his portrayal of the other statuary in the story.

> The workmen were so closely gathered round the open trench that I saw nothing till [the excavator] made them divide. Then, full in the sun, and flashing it back, almost, in spite of her dusky incrustations, I beheld, propped up with stones against a heap of earth, a majestic marble image.[33]

The sunlight acts directly on the "full" image of the Juno: both distinctions from other described statuary are mentioned in this description, as the narrator notes her full figure as well as the direct illumination of her figure. Furthermore, the Juno 'flashes back' the light, instead of passively allowing it to act on her body. This power is distinct from the

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[32] James, 9.
[33] James, 16.

unresisting figures of the busts in the garden, who "stand" in the dim light and allow it to act on them. Here, the Juno pushes it away from her again, a distinct indication of her modern agency and influence. The goddess's animation overcomes the 'dusky incrustations' that attempt to subdue her action and her 'majesty.' The narrator confirms this suggestion of her power when he declares her "an embodiment of celestial supremacy," a description that affirms her ethereal power. The Juno has more agency in the modern day than any other statue on the villa grounds.[34]

The trouble begins as soon as the excavators bring the Juno out of the ground, and it seems that her influence grows the further she gets from the soil of her resting place. The Juno's evocation is distinct from the other statues in that they remove her from the earth and eventually divest her of her 'earthly stains,' while the other sculptures on Valerio's grounds are gradually uncovered as time passes. The other statues inhabit a garden that the narrator describes as "untrimmed" and full of "tangled, twisted trees," but "exquisitely romantic" as a result of the "ghosts of the past" that he feels remain in a place so untouched and uncultivated.[35] Thus the statues within the garden maintain their "mouldy," "mossy" coats.[36] In contrast, the "earth-stained" body of the Juno is cleaned, and for Valerio the goddess's authority and potency only increase as a result. The Juno does, however, possess her distinct power even before her marble body is cleansed in the modern day. As opposed to the busts in the garden, left untouched and therefore still part of the past, the Juno is forcefully removed from the ground by Martha and her excavators. She is the only piece of sculpture in the story that is removed from the earth

[34] James, 16.
[35] James, 8.
[36] James, 5.

in this way, and as such she possesses a specific influence over the count. The cleaning only serves to evidence her full integration into the present day. After the superintendent restores her, the narrator notes that her marble skin seems to "glow with a kind of renascent purity and bloom, and but for her broken hand you might have fancied she had just received the last stroke of the chisel."[37] The use of 'renascent' in this statement indicates her full reanimation: as a result of her cleaning, she comes alive again.

The otherworldly, godlike qualities that the Juno possessed before her cleaning are heightened after the count removes the earthly incrustation that evidences her ties to the past. Her vivification represents a powerful, almost supernatural force. Spying on the count's lustrations by moonlight, the narrator describes the goddess's new incarnation:

> The casement yielded to my pressure, turned on its hinges, and showed me what I had been looking for—a transfiguration. The beautiful image stood bathed in the cold radiance, shining with a purity that made her convincingly divine…she now had a complexion like silver slightly dimmed. The effect was almost terrible; beauty so expressive could hardly be inanimate. [38]

Here, the removal of her mossy coat indicates how at odds she is with the modern world she's awakened to. She is cold and otherworldly: the use of 'terrible' is reminiscent of the Bible, where it is used to describe power incomprehensible to man. She is not meant to be among the present day. Again the Juno is bathed in light, and yet instead of reflecting back the sunlight that acted on her, she revels in it, her marble skin almost seeming to absorb its brilliance and reemit a glow unadulterated by the dirt as it was before.

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[37] James, 19.
[38] James, 31.

The narrator's description of the Juno statue as "divine" suggests Valerio's sentiments as well—after the initial libation, he begins to venerate her form, eventually going as far as to sacrifice to her as his ancestors might have done. The narrator witnesses the consequence of this interaction when he goes with Martha to visit the statue that has so ensnared her husband. The narrator describes, "we seemed really to stand in a pagan temple, and as we gazed at the serene divinity I think we each of us felt for a moment the breath of superstition…it was rudely arrested by our observing a curious glitter on the face of the low altar. A second glance showed us it was blood!"[39] The Juno's figure affects both the narrator and Martha, who are briefly touched by the strength of 'superstition' that so absorbs the count. The blood on the altar, however, is most indicative of the Juno's pull on Valerio. Here the count adheres to the ancient sacrificial practices of his ancestors, and though James gives little detail concerning the act, Valerio's compliance with ancient religious custom indicates how fully into the past, the time of his ancestors, the Juno has managed to draw him.

The narrator's portrayal of the count's devotional space also suggests Valerio's intentions. The count has the goddess sculpture moved to the villa's casino, which the narrator calls a "deserted garden house" built to imitate an Ionic temple. Valerio's removal of the Juno to the form of an ancient temple indicates his return to an earlier age of worship. The use of an Ionic temple is also appropriate, as the Ionic order was considered by Vitruvius (author of *De Architectura* in the time of Augustus,) to be more graceful or delicate (Fig. 1.4). With its structured curves, the Ionic order is distinctly graceful—the "volutes, like graceful curling hair, hanging over right and left…like the

[39] James, 35.

folds of matronly robes" indicate a kind of "feminine slenderness."[40] This image is wholly appropriate for a building containing the Juno, as Juno is in charge of female domestic affairs. Vitruvius's use of "matronly" is also notable, as ancient Romans also held a festival called Matronalia, a celebration of Juno Lucina, the goddess of childbirth.[41] The count therefore removes the Juno to an ancient location that reinforces her ancient qualities and to some extent legitimizes and supports his worship of her.[42]

Despite the count's extreme veneration of the Juno statue, James's story seems to suggest that the impetus for his wild reverence stems from the same imaginative instinct as the narrator's appreciation of the goddess's beauty. Martha's imaginative power moves her to reinvigorate Valerio's ancient villa, as she finds pleasure in the romantic atmosphere that the old, moldy sculptures add to the estate. James's narrator notes this when he notes, "next after that slow-coming, slow-going smile of her lover, it was the rusty complexion of his patrimonial marbles that she most prized."[43] Likewise, the Juno seems to put Valerio under a spell that results from his fascination with her form. Valerio evidences his inventive power in a confrontation with the narrator, where the count speaks on his interpretation of a moldy bust of Hermes in his garden (Fig. 1.5). Conversing with the narrator, but fixated on the Hermes bust, Valerio announces,

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[40] Vitruvius, *Ten Books on Architecture,* Trans. Morris Hickey Morgan, Cambridge: Harvard Univeristy Press, 1914.
[41] Christopher Smith, "Worshipping Mater Matuta: Ritual and Context," in *Religion in Archaic and Republican Rome and Italy,* ed. Edward Bispham and Christopher Smith (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), 142-143.
[42] Also interesting is the literal translation of 'Lucina': it means "Juno who brings children into the light," a reading strongly reminiscent of Valerio's fate here (he is brought by her into the 'light' of new faith.) Juno had many incarnations, so it's impossible to distinguish whether James knew of this epithet, but this project has done nothing if not drill into me the expanse of James's encyclopedic mind.
[43] James, 5.

> Formerly I used to be afraid of him. But now [he]…suggests to me the most delightful images. He stood pouting his great lips in some old Roman's garden two thousand years ago. He saw the sandaled feet treading the alleys…he knew the old feasts and the old worships, the old believers and the old gods. As I sit here he speaks to me, in his own dumb way, and describes it all![44]

The Juno has awoken something in Valerio, a deadlier power of imagination, as before her disinterment he paid little attention to the dirty, musty sculptures. Valerio's assertion that the Hermes 'speaks' to him indicates its new suggestive power, and yet his emphatic elaboration of what the bust proposes indicates frenetic, irrepressible mental visualization. The narrator validates this notion when he notes, "I envied [Valerio] the force of his imagination, and I used sometimes to close my eyes with a vague desire that when I opened them I might find Apollo under the opposite tree."[45] Here, the Juno evokes an irrepressible force of imagination in Valerio that is strong enough to remove him from the modern day, thrusting him back into his ancestral past and towards a pagan adoration of her form.

James sets the count's adoration of the Juno statue directly in dialogue with a subsequent scene that occurs within the Pantheon. Although the narrator acknowledges that some time passes between the two scenes, he moves directly from his conversation with Valerio and the Hermes bust to their interaction in the Pantheon (Fig. 1.6). The Pantheon represents a counterpoint to the Juno's perverse awakening. James suggests that although the massive ancient structure confronts many Romans and visitors daily, the nature that grows within its edifice prevents it from transfixing its admirers. The Pantheon ages organically with history, changing significance as time passes. James

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[44] James, 24-25.
[45] James, 29.

describes the interior of the structure as full of nature and greenery, a portrayal that emphasizes the ancient temple's rightful connection to both past and present, as the intersection between tender greenery and fractured, ancient stone suggests the coexistence of past and present. The Pantheon therefore possesses features that exemplify both time periods. The juxtaposition between past and present within the Pantheon, evidenced by the greenery inside, is important for an interaction with modern man because it indicates that the temple belongs in the present, unlike the Juno.

In James's text, the nature that grows atop the Pantheon's ancient stones serves to vivify the structure and bring it further into the modern world (Fig 1.7).[46] The narrator describes how "the ample space, in free communion with the weather, had become as mouldy and mossy and verdant as a strip of garden soil,"[47] an indication of the communion that occurs when ancient structures are left to age alone. The interaction between the building and nature leads the reader to a conception of the ancient temple as animate or living. Not only does the Pantheon allow for rain to enter the temple, but nature has also taken root directly within the ancient structure in the form of "tender herbage" which springs up "in the crevices of the slabs" directly beneath the oculus.[48]

The animation of the Pantheon is distinct from the Juno's false arousal. While the Pantheon exists alongside the present day, the Juno's supernatural qualities and abrupt introduction into modernity cause an upheaval in James's Roman character. James seems to deplore the notion of bringing an antiquity fully into the modern sphere and pretending

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[46] The interior of the Pantheon would not have had greenery growing between its marble slabs during James's time: the image of the ancient temple that James proffers here is drawn from his imagination.
[47] James, 26.
[48] James, 27.

that her significance has not changed—he believes that antiquities are more evocative of their past when they are left with some substantiation of their age, as the Pantheon is. The story imagines the confusion that would arise among the Roman people if the pieces of their past were realized in the present: a return to pagan rites and sacrifices, a dangerous devolution.

Thus while the Pantheon embodies a past harmonizing with the present, the Juno statue, meant to remain in the ground, is brought fully into the present with dangerous consequences. It's significant to note that this appropriation is initially undesired by everyone, including Valerio. The Americans in the story do not want to see relics separated from the evidence of their age: although Martha wants to put the objects on display, she wants the sarcophagus to maintain its grassy covering. Here James articulates his own visual desires. His interest in and love of Rome arises from the city's condition as a visual intersection of past and present. As one critic stated, "it was the past as a living part of the present that he responded to…he [delighted] in the dynamic and organic relationship of the present to the past."[49] Given his narrator's portrayal of the Juno's reanimation, it's safe to say that James does not see the excavation and modern cleansing of the Juno as representing a dynamic and organic interaction between past and present. The Pantheon, however, with his depiction of its easy harmony between ancient stone and new life, grows organically alongside history, slowly changing its significance and appearance as time passes.

In his story, James suggests that the antiquities in Rome have the power of evocation—their forms and structures activate the viewer's imagination, a quality

[49] Viola Hopkins Winner, *Henry James and the Visual Arts* (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1970), 27.

especially significant for a writer like James. For James, it isn't enough to abstractly envision what the past might have been like: he wants a physical representation of Rome's history to base his visualizations in. Speaking on the excavations taking place in the Forum, he declares, "it 'says' more things to you than you can repeat to see the past, the ancient world, as you stand there, bodily turned up with the spade and transformed from an immaterial, inaccessible fact of time into a matter of soils and surfaces."[50] Here, in his nonfiction work *Italian Hours*, James expresses his desire to see his abstract notion of Rome's history realized and transformed into a concrete actualization. Rome's relics serve as concrete reminders of the past that spark the writer's imagination and "speak" of antiquity.

This power, James seems to say, is wonderful in moderation—and yet the Roman Valerio, already hovering on the edge of paganism (in St. Peter's even before the Juno, he declares "I am not a good Catholic…my poor old confessor long ago gave me up; he told me I was a good boy, but a *pagan!"*[51]) slips easily into the image of antiquity that the Juno proffers. Contemplation of her form proves disastrous for the count, as the full evocation of the Juno (her excavation, cleansing, and therefore complete emergence into the modern world) pulls him back to the life of his ancestors. The close proximity between past and present in Rome allows for this danger. This theme is not exclusive to "The Last of the Valerii": James's "Adina," also written in 1874, tells the tale of an ancient topaz cameo that ensnares the attentions of Italians and Americans alike. At the end of the story, as a means of conclusion, one American forces the other to "return [it] to

[50] Henry James, *Italian Hours* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1909), 43.
[51] James, "Travelling Companions," 7.

the moldering underworld of the Roman past."[52] Thus the Juno must also be reburied—the narrator and Martha entomb her again, removing Valerio from her agency. As they cover her with dirt, the evidence of her presence in another time, they refuse Valerio the ability to confuse the past and present.

[52] Henry James, "Adina," in *The Last of the Valerii, Master Eustace, The Romance of Certain Old Clothes, and Other Tales* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1923), 267.

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Architectural Apprehensions: The Duomo of Milan and Venice's San Marco as Amalgams in "Travelling Companions"

> To help myself through the morning, I went into the Borghese Gallery. The great treasure of this collection is a certain masterpiece by Titian…the picture is one of the finest of its admirable author, rich and simple and brilliant with the true Venetian fire. It unites the charm of an air of latent symbolism with a steadfast splendor and solid perfection of design.[53]

"Travelling Companions," written by James in 1870, ends with the narrator and his future wife standing before Titian's "Sacred and Profane Love." Titian's painting captures a theme at the heart of James's story: the text's attention to juxtapositions and combinations. The painting itself is an amalgam, as it depicts two women, two variations on the definition of love, where one symbolizes sacred love and the other profane. The charm of the painting, however, lies in its seamless amalgamation of the two distinct elements into a cohesive, complete whole. The painting in this sense represents James's conception of Italy and his interpretation of his own twofold experience of the country. Titian's painting suggests that both 'types' of love must be depicted in order to fully convey love's meaning, and likewise James's narrator expresses his attempt to interact with the Basilica San Marco on both a concrete and abstract level. The narrator finds himself drawn to the pictorial elements within the church, and yet his frustration results from his desire to interact with the space as ancient religious visitors would have. Ultimately, this type of interaction is impossible for him, as the figure of his female

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[53] Henry James, "Travelling Companions." In *Travelling Companions,* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1919), 1-51. 51.

companion distracts him, and a full experience with the church remains beyond his grasp. In "Travelling Companions," James implies the moral anxiety that results from both the narrator and the author's attraction to the visual splendors of San Marco. The juxtapositions and dualities throughout James's story indicate the narrator's anxiety concerning two meanings he knows to be inherent to the church (its spiritual significance and concrete beauty) but his ultimate absorption into the visual.

The sentence that James uses to describe the duality specific to the painting is straightforward enough for the reader, and yet the narrator's interpretation of the painting that follows is convoluted and contradictory (Fig. 2.1). Approaching the painting, the narrator (Mr. Brooke) states, "[the picture] unites the charm of an air of latent symbolism with a steadfast splendor and a solid perfection of design."[54] This sentence indicates an interest in two competing elements present in the image. The first half of the narrator's declaration conveys the allure and appeal of hidden meanings and significances that must be teased out of the image, while the second suggests an affinity for the visual qualities of the painting, as the adjectives "steadfast" and "solid" denote. The true charm of Titian's image, however, does not lie in these qualities considered separate from one another, but instead the grace and ease with which the painting "unites" the abstract and concrete elements represented by the story. The theme of pleasurable formal composition versus concealed significance recurs throughout James's text, particularly in scenes that occur within the Basilica San Marco in Venice and atop the Cathedral of Milan.

Mr. Brooke's formal description of the piece, while initially straightforward, confuses his initial distinction between the painting's two female figures. He notes,

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[54] James, 51.

"beside a low sculptured well sit two young and beautiful women: one richly clad, and full of mild dignity and repose; the other with unbound hair, naked, ungirdled by a great reverted mantle of Venetian purple, and radiant with the frankest physical sweetness and grace."[55] The narrator describes one of the figures as a dignified woman of propriety, while he illustrates the other in terms that liken her to Milton's Eve.[56] However, speaking to his soon-to-be wife, Mr. Brooke summarizes the painting in a sentence that confuses its subject, refusing the reader (and his female companion) a definitive statement concerning his comprehension of Titian's work and the nature of the two women.

> "They call it," I answered, -- and as I spoke my heart was in my throat, -- "a representation of Sacred and Profane Love. The name perhaps roughly expresses its meaning. The serious, stately woman is the likeness, one may say, of love as an experience,-- the gracious, impudent goddess of love as a sentiment; this of the passion that fancies, the other of the passion that knows."[57]

The only moments of clarity within this account occur at the beginning and end of Mr. Brooke's statement. The attired woman represents love as experience—that much is clear. However, although the bipartite organization of the descriptive sentence (coupled with the dual composition of the painting) suggests that "love as sentiment" applies to the naked woman, the punctuation makes it impossible to assign meaning definitively.[58] The em dash that separates the two differing definitions of love confuses the sentence, as an

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[55] Ibid.
[56] "She, as a veil, down to the slender waist/ Her unadorned golden tresses wore/ Dishevelled, but in wanton ringlets waved/ As the vine curls her tendrils…" Milton, *Paradise Lost* 4.304-307
[57] James, 51.
[58] The naked woman herself represents a combination of opposing traits, as unbound hair in art often referred to a woman's lasciviousness. The narrator, however, couples this description with an assertion of her "grace" and refinement.

may indicate an abrupt change of thought or a complicated continuation of the previous idea, leaving the meaning imprecise. It is possible that James's written line references both female bodies?

Titian's painting inspires a variety of conflicted readings: some explanations suggest that the clothed woman is a bride attended to by Venus and Cupid, while others call both women variations on the same figure. Mr. Brooke appears to struggle with a basic idea of the painting brought to light by its adopted title—which figure represents sacred love, and which profane? Are the two as mutually exclusive as the distinct figures suggest—or does the fact that the features of the two women strongly resemble one another indicate a more complex reading?[59] For James, the painting's plethora of conflicted meanings evokes the core nature of the piece. He makes his interpretation explicit with his narrator's rendition of the painting. Mr. Brooke's descriptions suggest that the painting's importance rests not in critical inference but in the narrator's muddled, labyrinthine portrayal. Mr. Brooke's perplexing interpretation of Titian's painting could be intentional—a deliberate attempt to confuse his audience—or perhaps unconscious, a complication that inherently arises from his own contradictory judgments.

Titian's "Sacred and Profane Love" therefore provokes a series of significances, all with import to James's story. Mr. Brooke's apparent struggle to assign 'profanity' and 'sanctity' to the two women in Titian's painting indicates a strong interest in the unification of dissimilar natures. The line that conveyed Mr. Brooke's desire for this "union" also suggests another place of contention for the narrator: the friction between physical, visual beauty ("solid perfection of design") and underlying significance. Mr.

[59] For more information, see Walter Friedlaender, "La Tintura delle Rose (the Sacred and Profane Love) by Titian," *The Art Bulletin* 20 (1938): 320-321, 323-324.

Brooke is conflicted about the degree to which the pictorially pleasing, painted surface of an image should capture his attention, or whether the union of these two qualities (beautiful physical features and the desire to evoke underlying importance) is necessary for an experience of art pieces.

This notion of visual appeal confronting hidden significance is especially potent for the narrator's comprehension of (and delight in) the Basilica San Marco: for Mr. Brooke, the difficulty of his experience rests in his concern that the visual content doesn't evoke the intellectual depth that he believes it should (Fig 2.2). Within the Basilica, the narrator is flighty and unreliable: almost as soon as he condemns his attraction to "pictorial effects," he knowingly contradicts himself, allowing himself pleasure at the sight of the young Charlotte Evans.

> There came over me, too, a poignant conviction of the ludicrous folly of the idle spirit of travel. How trivial and superficial its imaginings! To this builded sepulchre [sic] of trembling hope and dread, this monument of mighty passions, I had wandered in search of pictorial effects. O vulgarity! Of course I remained, nevertheless, still curious of effects. Suddenly I perceived a very agreeable one. Kneeling on a low *prie-dieu*, with her hands clasped, a lady was gazing upward at the great mosaic Christ in the dome of the choir.[60]

The repetition of "effects" in this tirade indicates the narrator's awareness of his hypocrisy. Nevertheless, this statement cements the cause of Mr. Brooke's anxiety within the church. Mr. Brooke's attraction to its visual effects (or so he believes) is trivial and shallow compared to the church's position as a "monument of mighty passions," a statement that emphasizes the strength of religious belief in the church's inaugural visitors.

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[60] James, 21.

The narrator's anxiety results from the comparison he draws between his own emotional experience and the emotional depth of the church's ancient visitors. The Basilica San Marco evokes a momentary crisis in the narrator, as Mr. Brooke realizes that his enjoyment of the church results from its visual splendors and therefore doesn't evoke mental engagement. The narrator feels that his impetus for visiting the church – his "open-eyed desire" for "Observation"[61]— is inconsequential in comparison to the forceful emotions of "trembling hope and dread" that he believes were present at the building's creation. Mr. Brooke measures his aimless tour of the basilica against earlier visitors' forceful religious impetus and finds a discrepancy, which leads him to question his effortless, pleasurable reaction to the basilica's aesthetic qualities. He presents the "idle spirit of travel" that draws him to the church as less meaningful than the strong beliefs elicited by the basilica in earlier times. At the heart of his crisis is the narrator's search for a "poignant" experience of the place that can equal (in emotional significance) the archaic visitor's passionate response. [62]

Charlotte Evans appears to experience the type of emotional reaction to the church space and other religious imagery that the narrator desires (Fig 2.3). Although Charlotte herself complicates her interaction with San Marco with the statement "O, they were only half-prayers…I'm not a Catholic yet" her stance (kneeling on the *prie-dieu*) indicates some desire for legitimate interaction with the holy space that is fully realized later in the text. Furthermore, the narrator states that she remains "in the same position" on the *prie-dieu* as he approaches her, and greets him "without moving from her place."[63]

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[61] Capitalization of "Observation" from James's text. James, 5.
[62] James, 21.
[63] James, 22.

Her steadfast position indicates a degree of purposefulness and intentional action: she came to the church to pray, and she remains true to that sentiment. Although Charlotte's passion is not immediately apparent within San Marco, it proves itself at their subsequent visit to Tintoretto's "Crucifixion," where her emotional reaction is strongly palpable to the reader.[64] Watching her, the narrator states, "I observed my companion: pale, motionless, oppressed, she evidently felt with poignant sympathy the commanding force of the work. Passing me rapidly, she descended into the aisle of the church, dropped into a chair, and, burying her face in her hands, burst into an agony of sobs." Although Charlotte's response to the church is distinct from the archaic visitors' interaction with San Marco, her position within the basilica indicates her desire to attempt a communion, while her rush of emotion in reaction to the "Crucifixion" suggests a passionate response to religious imagery akin to the "mighty passion" that drew ancient worshippers to the basilica.

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[64] Charlotte's reaction to the churches and paintings that they visit together is slightly suspect, however, as it could be that the narrator fabricates reality in order to increase her emotional reaction to the works as the story develops. Charlotte and Mr. Brooke first meet in front of DaVinci's "Last Supper," and although she is pleased by the image, she does not exhibit any sort of radical emotional reaction. The narrator then heavily reads into her posture, saying, "Her eyes then for the first time met my own. They were deep and dark and luminous, -- I fancied streaming with tears. I watched her. A thrill of delight passed through my heart as I guessed at her moistened lids." This line suggests that the narrator wants Charlotte to express strong emotions in reaction to the artwork, as it would add to his image of her piety. As such, by the end of the story she is inconsolable at the sight of Christ in pain, demonstrated by her reaction to Tintoretto's "Crucifixion." It appears that Charlotte takes on the image of Mr. Brooke's fantasy as the story develops. For this analysis I use her apparent feelings of devotion, as I think it's still significant to note that despite her reaction to the space (presumably the type of 'authentic' experience he desires,) he still condemns her interaction with the space. (James 5, 33)

Mr. Brooke's immediate dismissal of her sentiments and her religious posture indicates that he considers Charlotte's experience within the basilica as "superficial" as his own. He easily dismisses her pose within San Marco, saying "her attitude slightly puzzled me" and later, "was she only playing at prayer?" After Charlotte's "painful emotional" reaction to the Tintoretto, he makes a statement that confirms his cynicism. "What a different thing this visiting of churches would be for us, if we occasionally felt the prompting to fall on our knees. I begin to grow ashamed of this perpetual attitude of bald curiosity."[65] Mr. Brooke's disregard of Charlotte's religious experience shows through here, as her sentiments are evidently not enough for the narrator. Mr. Brooke doesn't believe that Charlotte experiences San Marco (or any other religious site, for that matter) any more deeply than he. In his mind, her only effect within the church is on the narrator himself, where her response becomes a part of his appealing landscape within the basilica. Despite his anxieties concerning his attachment to the splendor of the church, Mr. Brooke adds Charlotte to his experience of the visual qualities of San Marco. She therefore loses her agency in the scene, an indication that he dismisses her response to the church. This rejection further suggests that Mr. Brooke does not look to religious fervor as a means through which to engage with the church.

Mr. Brooke's attention to the physical material of the church, however, asserts an interest in the history behind the church's construction, specifically the presence of earlier worshippers. He is strongly attracted to the components of the basilica that evidence its age and continual use, primarily tangible elements like San Marco's cracked floor: "triple-tinted with eternal service…the wavy carpet of compacted stone, where a

[65] James, 35.

thousand once-lighted fragments glimmer through the long attrition of idle feet and devoted knees" (Fig 2.4). Along with the basilica's 'eternal service,' an indication of its presence in another time, Mr. Brooke also concentrates on the physical impact of the "long attrition of idle feet and devoted knees." This line draws attention to the church's early visitors. His sumptuous descriptions emphasize the rich visual detail present within San Marco, and yet they also draw attention to the implied history and visitations behind the church's façade.

The narrator's focus on the lingering presence of the ancient worshippers within the basilica indicates his attempt to connect with the significance of experience that they were involved with. The syntax of his description makes his desire explicit. In a fourteen-line sentence, Mr. Brooke lines up the visible, physical qualities of San Marco, (including descriptions of its opulent materials: malachite, porphyry, gold, and alabaster) separating each with a semi-colon and "from," finally culminating with a declaration that rings with importance:

> From those rude concavities of dome and semi-dome, where the multitudinous facets of pictorial mosaic shimmer and twinkle in their own dull brightness…from long dead crystal and the sparkle of undying lamps, -- there proceeds a dense rich atmosphere of splendor and sanctity which transports the half-stupefied traveler to the age of a simpler and more awful faith. [66]

Here the ancient visual effects of San Marco's interior have the power to "transport" the visitor to another time, an ability that results from its physical qualities. The concrete elements of the church that the ancient worshippers interacted with are still present, and as such Mr. Brooke focuses on them as a means of bringing himself back into their "age of a simpler and more awful faith."

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[66] James, 21.

Mr. Brooke focuses on his physical interaction with the church as a way to connect to another time. Physical interactions with the basilica (touching and "kneeling") are the same as they would have been at the structure's construction. Although "Travelling Companions" does not describe Mr. Brooke coming into contact with San Marco in this way, in James's "Italian Hours" the author connects with the church space in terms that directly mimic the descriptions of ancient worshippers in "Travelling Companions." James states that the church is composed of "things near enough to touch and kneel upon and lean against,"[67] a line strongly reminiscent of Mr. Brooke's recognition of the "idle feet and devoted knees" that left their impression on the pavement.[68] It appears that James is taken by the connection between past and present, especially as it is palpable in the physical components of a building and the physical actions of its visitors.

This mirroring of the present day and the past serves to legitimize the narrator's experience within San Marco—through his physical interaction with the basilica, he becomes part of a continuum rooted in Italy's medieval history, or even in antiquity, as San Marco is a martyrium supposedly built for the remains of St. Mark. Mr. Brooke therefore mirrors the actions of the ancient visitors in order to grasp at their 'real' experience of San Marco. He dismisses religious devotion as a way of communing with the church, and yet he seems to consider the concrete elements as a way to reach towards a significant interaction. The narrator uses the physical details as a portal through which

[67] Henry James, *Italian Hours* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1909), 11.
[68] James, "Travelling Companions," 21.

to access a passionate experience of the church and move away from the "superficial" wanderings of the modern traveler.[69]

Mr. Brooke's interaction with the basilica indicates his concern with authenticity and the search for an authentic experience that pervades the story: his repetition of terms like "superficial," "real," and "reality" reveal this interest. The physical details of San Marco offer him a tangible method of connection, a way to grasp at (and potentially mimic) the ancient interaction with the space. The narrator's use of "reality" at several points throughout the story (in regards to his touristic experience of Venice, he states, "the reality of Venice seems to me to exceed all romance") indicates his desire for physical experience over vague sentiment. Likewise, he implies his inclinations within San Marco when he condemns his experience as "superficial."[70] The narrator's diction here suggests an intense concern for validity in experience, as the narrator constantly makes judgments concerning genuineness and authenticity. Clearly the experience within San Marco does not qualify as a 'real' or true experience for Mr. Brooke, as he strongly rebukes it. This is most likely a consequence of his failed interaction with the space. Although he indicates that a consideration of the basilica's physical details can "transport" him to a fuller appreciation of the space, Charlotte's appearance ultimately distracts him, ironically cutting short his tirade concerning the "vulgarity" of his attraction to "pictorial effects."

James sets his description of the basilica's interior against his portrayal of Venice. This polarity between the "picturesque" and the light is molded and controlled at various

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[69] This could be a commentary by James on Catholicism, as ancient Catholics often used the devotional imagery within churches as a tool to pray through in order to reach God.
[70] James, 23, 33.

points in the story to emphasize a greater conflict. While the basilica's "pictorial effects" and curved domes add to the "picturesque fantastic gloom" of the church, the narrator describes the city in terms that emphasize its interaction with light. These two different states have a distinct impact on Mr. Brooke, as the cool, dark atmosphere of the church placates the "fever of curiosity and delight" of his first hours in Venice. The Piazza San Marco and the rest of Venice is bathed in sun, and the narrator's description of the illuminated vista pays particular attention to the quality of light on water that's specific to the Italian city:

> It was that enchanting Venetian hour when the ocean-touching sun sits melting to death, and the whole still air seems to glow with the soft effusion of his golden substance. Within the church, the deep brown shadow-masses, the heavy thick-tinted air, reigned in richer, quainter, more fantastic gloom than my feeble pen can reproduce the likeness of.[71]

The distinct allure of the warmth and light of Venice plays against the shadowy atmosphere of the church, a juxtaposition that the narrator makes even more explicit in his descriptions of the visual splendors of the basilica's interior.

Mr. Brooke illustrates the Milan Cathedral's (the *Duomo di Milano* in Italian) interior aisles in terms that align directly with the atmosphere within San Marco, as he notes the "clustering inner darkness of the high arcades" and the "light-defying pinnacles and spires." Despite these similarities, however, the narrator chooses to focus his narrated experience of the *Duomo* on a different stage: the roof of the church (Fig 2.5). This is perhaps a result of the roof's ability convey another duality reminiscent of the distinction elucidated in Venice: the potent division between Northern Europe and Italy, here called the "North" and "South." The panoramic view that Mr. Brooke witnesses

[71] James, 21.

(coupled with the action of light on marble) juxtaposes Italy against "the North," leading the narrator to articulate a conviction about his perceived duality of Italian culture.[72]

The view from the Cathedral's roof underscores the division between Italy and Northern Europe. The narrator first discusses Lombardy, then "the view toward the long mountain line which shuts out the north," a line that, through the use of "shuts out," emphasizes the separation between the two entities.[73] Additionally, standing on the *Duomo's* marble surface, the narrator feels a sense of importance—he calls the *Duomo* "a mighty world," and states that besides the cathedral one also "possess[es] the view of all green Lombardy." On the next page, he adds: "the south…offers a great emotion to the Northern traveler. A vague, delicious impulse of conquest stirs in his heart."[74] This strange desire for possession suggests the narrator's desire to control the "South." Mr. Brooke's impulse cements the relationship between the South and Italy—although the connection is never outright stated, his open use of "Northern" to describe himself (and his hunger for possession) indicates that the object of his desire is, in fact, 'Southern' Italy.

James's narrator uses light to indicate the presence and values of the 'South.' Light proves its significance within the first lines, when the narrator observes how thoroughly sunlight affects his perception, a significant statement, as he is a self-defined "Northern traveler." He describes, "the solid whiteness lies in mighty slabs along the iridescent slopes of nave and transept," a confusing line, as his awareness of the cathedral's marble shifts from 'solid whiteness' to 'iridescent', a descriptive term that

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[72] James, 9.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Ibid.

suggests luminous colors changing as he moves. Here light unsteadies the narrator, leading him to a contradictory perception of the Cathedral's surface. While Charlotte is "protected" from the sun, the narrator is dazed and unbalanced by it.[75] James's portrayal of light in the story emphasizes its capricious nature, as it constantly shifts and changes. This is strongly reminiscent of the narrator's conflicting statements of the Italians that he encounters, where they are "charming" in one moment and "mendacious and miserable" in the next.[76]

The narrator suggests that the cathedrals in the story share qualities with his native "North." Mr. Brooke makes several statements that indicate a relationship between the two entities. First, in his description of the *Duomo's* marble roof, he notes that the "slopes of nave and transept" resemble "the lonely snowfields of the higher Alps" (Fig. 2.6). The resemblance between the cathedral's marble slabs and mountains is unremarkable in itself, and yet the inclusion of "higher" could refer to the peaks that border Germany, the narrator's place of residence. A stronger piece of evidence exists in Mr. Brooke's line about conquering. Looking to the south, he observes, "to the south the long shadows fused and multiplied." This line contrasts the previous point concerning the south's relation to light, and yet the context defies this definition. The shadows "multiply" here presumably as a result of Mr. Brooke's covetous desires: his impulse to dominate the South (Italy) visually manifests itself in the proliferation of shadow, previously described in conjunction with the picturesque interiors of the Milan *Duomo* and San Marco. Therefore, if the narrator represents the North through picturesque

[75] James, 6.
[76] James, 20.

shadow (a constant companion to the churches in the story,) then the cathedrals possess qualities of Mr. Brooke's defined "North."[77]

Milan occupies a unique pivotal role in the story, as it possesses attributes of both the cold 'North' and luminous 'South.' Although the narrator distinctly sets light and the picturesque at odds with one another ("the southern sun that poured into the [Northern Italian towns]…seemed fatal to any lurking shadow of picturesque mystery") he describes an Italian woman within the *Duomo* as "the genius of the Picturesque." This complicates the relationship between the diametrically opposed "North" and "South." This could in part be a consequence of Milan's position as a strange juxtaposition between Southern and Northern values and qualities. Regarding this, Mr. Brooke remarks, "Milan had, to my sense, a peculiar charm of temperate gayety, -- the softness of the South without its laxity. With the approaching night…there came up into our faces a delicious emanation as from the sweetness of Transalpine life."[78] The use of "temperate" is unique here, as it combats the tendency for passion and frenzy that overtook the narrator in other Italian towns. The strong heat of the city that previously "deepened the Italian, the Southern, the local character of things" is mitigated by a cool breeze from the north, a detail that presumably leads to the city's new "temperate" climate.[79] Moreover, speaking to Charlotte from the summit of the cathedral, the narrator makes a statement that bonds the light-filled city and the northern cathedrals, uniting them in one definitive line. "Think of this great trap for the sunbeams, in this city of

[77] James, 9.
[78] James, 10.
[79] James, 5.

yellows and russets and crimsons, of liquid vowels and glancing smiles being, like one of our Northern cathedrals, a temple to Morality and Conscience."[80]

The narrator uses "picturesque" in reference to both Italy and the 'North' throughout the story, and yet its meaning remains consistent: James uses "picturesque" to denote the pleasurable aesthetic qualities of an object or space, to emphasize the visual pleasure that the spectator gains from the scene. In her book *Henry James and the Visual Arts*, author Viola Hopkins Winner writes that "James used *picturesque* to designate the aesthetic aspects of any object or natural scene, the elements of which please the eye as a picture does through color, light and movement."[81] This quality is especially palpable within San Marco. In her section on the picturesque Winner reproduces a line from James's non-fiction work "A Little Tour in France" that strongly recalls the interior of San Marco. Speaking on the Rhiems Cathedral, James notes, "the white light in the lower part of Rhiems really contributes to the picturesqueness of the interior. It makes the gloom above look richer still, and throws that part of the roof which rests upon the gigantic piers of the transepts into mysterious remoteness."[82] It follows, then, that the narrator would use "picturesque" to describe the Italian woman that approaches him and Charlotte within the *Duomo,* as he at first admires her "becoming" figure. Speaking on her personage, he declares, "This poor woman is the genius of the Picturesque. She shows us the essential misery that lies behind it…what a poise of the head! The picturesque is handsome, all the same."[83] Here the woman's visual qualities mask the

[80] James, 11.
[81] Viola Hopkins Winner, *Henry James and the Visual Arts,* 33.
[82] Winner, 34.
[83] James, 12.

'misery' of her character, indicating another instance where aesthetic pleasure conceals a hidden significance.

The narrator's descriptive portrayal of the Italian women within the Piazza del Duomo indicates his condemnation of Southern character. The women possess a duality similar to (but more complex than) San Marco, as the narrator is captivated by their comeliness and yet condemns their lack of propriety. This tension first makes itself apparent as the women appear on balconies surrounding the Duomo's piazza, while the narrator and Charlotte watch from the cathedral's balcony. "At the little balconies of the windows…with their feet among the crowded flower-pots and their plump bare arms on the iron rails; lazy, dowdy Italian beauties would appear, still drowsy."[84] The juxtaposition of "dowdy" and "beauty" here indicates a set of oppositions that is (for the narrator) inherent to their character. Additionally, Mr. Brooke's assignation of the women as part of the South carries with it a series of significances that suggest a condemnation of its character. Simply the suggestion that Milan represents "the South without its laxity" indicates an unflattering portrayal of these women and the country they represent. Mr. Brooke's criticism of the Italian character rubs up against his admiration of their visual appeal in a juxtaposition reminiscent of San Marco. Again the narrator is drawn to "pictorial effects" while harshly judging and doubting the existence of a greater essence that lies behind an aesthetically pleasing exterior.[85]

The narrator's condemnation of Italian character is unsavory for the reader, especially when attempting to make a connection with James's own sentiments on the subject. It appears, however, that James himself is critical of his narrator, as he instills

[84] James, 10.
[85] James, 20.

Mr. Brooke with a palpable condescending attitude and a tendency to contradict himself that leaves the reader doubting his dependability. One prime example of this arises in the narrator's description of "Sacred and Profane Love." One of the only concrete statements within his interpretation of the painting is the distinction between "fancy" and "know" in the line "this of the passion that fancies, the other of the passion that knows." This is significant for a reading of the text, as the narrator often uses "fancy" in relation to himself as a verb and a noun, ("my fancy bounded forward…") despite its inherent definition as a 'fleeting' or 'superficial' feeling of interest. The use of this word indicates the increasing unreliability of the narrator, as one feature of Mr. Brooke's Italian experience rests in his search for genuineness, and yet he refers to himself with a word that includes superficiality as part of its definition. This places him in direct opposition to what he seemingly wants from Italy—an authentic experience.[86] Furthermore, James's letters from the time indicate feelings of frustration and embarrassment in regards to his fellow American travelers. Writing to his mother from Florence, he states, "a set of people less framed to provoke national self-complacency than [the Americans] would be hard to imagine. There is but one word to use in regards to them—vulgar, vulgar, vulgar."[87]

James and his narrator share a similar desire to interact with San Marco in a meaningful way. The author describes this inclination in the lens of his own experience, where he is a visitor to Venice, but one familiar with the place: acquainted enough with San Marco to declare a trip inside a result of "habit." James's agitation concerning this

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[86] James, 51.
[87] Henry James, "Letter to his Mother, October 13, 1869," from *The Letters of Henry James,* ed. By Percy Lubbock (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), 21-22.

type of experience comes to light within a statement on San Marco. Speaking on the basilica, he comments,

> It is only because there is another way of taking it that I venture to speak of [the church]; the way that offers itself after you have been in Venice a couple of months, and the light is hot in the great square, and you pass in under the pictured porticoes with a feeling of habit and friendliness and a desire for something cool and dark. From the moment, of course, that you go into any Italian church for any purpose but to say your prayers…you rank yourself among the trooping barbarians I just spoke of; you treat the place as an orifice in the peep-show.[88]

These lines indicate that James also struggles to define a genuine interaction with the church, as he berates himself for moving inside the structure with no intent to venerate the religious imagery. The inclusion of "orifice" in the final line is unsettling and somewhat lewd—its use indicates James's conception of this type of visitation as inappropriate and even degenerate. The excerpt begins with the writer entering the space in search of comfort and pleasure in the pictorial mosaics and cool atmosphere. In "Travelling Companions," his narrator acts in a similar way, an impulse that James condemns in his non-fiction essay. Still, James's inclusion of this paragraph not only indicates that the subject intrigues him, but that the church represents two separate types of experience for him as well—one characterized by a religious connection, and the other by a perverse desire for an "easy consciousness" of "beauty."[89]

"Travelling Companions" highlights the narrator's awareness that he cannot participate fully with San Marco—his experience cannot equal the experience of its ancient worshippers. Not only does he lack their religious background, he is also inherently an outsider because of his nationality—he consistently emphasizes the

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[88] James, *Italian Hours,* 10.
[89] Ibid.

distinction between his adopted home, the North, and the Southern aspects of Italy. This is perhaps why he feels more comfortable in Milan, as the city encompasses aspects of both cultures. The narrator's interaction with the *Duomo* emphasizes this division, as the view from its roof, as well as the cathedral itself, highlights the inherent separation between 'Southern' Italy and the cold 'North.' In addition, whereas the vast mosaics on the inside of San Marco would have functioned as a device for prayer for its early visitors, Mr. Brooke is overwhelmed by the imagery and the sensation of the church itself. He attempts to reach a significance like that of the ancient worshippers but ultimately falls short.

James clearly shares his narrator's anxiety, as he "could never absorb Italy as he had appropriated London and Oxford, and indeed all of England...where he had felt himself breathing the air of home."[90] Likewise, the author divulged in a letter that Italy did not "reveal itself easily, or ever completely" to him, despite the extensive amount of time he spent there.[91] James wrote this letter after the completion of "Travelling Companions," and yet the story reveals some of the anxiety that James felt after his visits to Italy: that as an American, he might never experience Italy as 'authentically' as a native would. James often condemns the touristic approach to travel, and yet at the root of his experience is a similar foreignness that he can never shake. The story suggests that James is in the process of working out for himself how he should interact with the religious spaces that he finds so visually appealing. The anxiety that James creates for his Mr. Brooke indicates James's own moral contemplation of the church's spectacle.

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[90] Leon Edel, *Henry James: The Untried Years 1843-1870*, Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1953, 298-299.

[91] James W. Tuttleton and Agostino Lombardo, eds, *The Sweetest Impression of Life: The James Family and Italy,* New York: New York University Press, 1990, 44.

The architectural details present at the Milan *Duomo* emphasize dualities as well as the distinction between Italy and the narrator's native land. His view from the top of the Cathedral mirrors his fractured conception of San Marco, as the vista demonstrates the distinct separation between the Italian 'South' and the cold 'North.' This estrangement indicates the reason behind Mr. Brooke's incomplete perception of San Marco: his Northern culture and ancestry refuse him the complete experience he desires. The juxtapositions and dualities throughout James's story therefore indicate the narrator's anxiety concerning the two meanings he knows to be inherent to San Marco—its spiritual significance and its concrete beauty—and his ultimate absorption into the visual, a consequence of his inability to communicate with the basilica's cultural and spiritual history.[92] The narrator's rapt attention to the visual indicates James's own frustrations: he is mindful of his American identity and its limitations in this environment, particularly its obstruction of his ability to fully experience the churches that he find so captivating.

[92] The narrator's interaction with the church also suggests a religious commentary by James, as Mr. Brooke finds himself drawn to the imagery not for its religious use, but for pure aesthetic pleasure. It is exactly this tendency that Protestants condemn, so a religious reading of this story could also prove fruitful.

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The Architecture of Character: Defining Morality at the Palace of the Caesars and the Colosseum in "Daisy Miller"

> The early Roman spring had filled the air with bloom and perfume, and the rugged surface of the Palatine was muffled with tender verdure. Daisy was strolling along the top of one of those great mounds of ruin that are embanked with mossy marble and paved with monumental inscriptions. It seemed to him that Rome had never been so lovely as just then. He stood…feeling the freshness of the year and the antiquity of the place reaffirm themselves in mysterious interfusion.[93]

"Daisy Miller," written by James in 1878, proposes several competing conceptions of the title character's virtue and morality. Daisy, a young American girl touring Italy with her mother and younger brother, finds herself ostracized from the American social group in Rome as a result of her interactions with the young Roman Giovanelli. James's story offers two contradictory interpretations of Daisy's character: in the first, Daisy is fully aware of her scandalous behavior and openly disregards the advice of her peers. She therefore deserves her fate: death by malaria, the disease presumably contracted from a late-night visit to the Colosseum with Giovanelli. In the second, Daisy is completely unaware of her unseemly behavior, possessing a child-like innocence that ultimately leads to her demise. James offers some insight into the truth of Daisy's character through her interaction with architecture in the story, as the text suggests a parallelism between the architectural elements that James focuses on and Daisy's indeterminate character. James's inclusion of ancient ruins (specifically the Palace of the

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[93] Henry James, *Daisy Miller* (New York: Dover Publications Inc, 1995), 51.

Caesars and the Colosseum) aids in this interpretation, as James's portrayal of the architecture around Daisy emphasizes juxtapositions between antithetical entities. This strongly references the two antithetical conceptions of Daisy's identity.

"Daisy Miller" acts as a study in character development and portrayal for James. The "harmonies" described throughout the scenes at the Palace and the amphitheater suggest James's interest in the creation of a character that embodies (or "interfuses") two seemingly irreconcilable qualities.[94] Here the author explores character formation and perspective, as Daisy represents both innocence and promiscuity in the text, despite James's personal assertion that the core of her character is virtuous. It is not insignificant that "Daisy Miller" was originally published as "Daisy Miller: A Study in Two Parts" in 1878, while James rewrote much of the text for its republishing in 1909. James's Daisy describes herself as a "flirt," and yet despite the problems this assertion poses for an argument of her decency, the text suggests that she is an honest flirt, one who doesn't fully understand the consequence of her actions and words. In this sense it appears that James uses "Daisy Miller" to examine how to present a character as ambiguous and difficult to define, yet still genuine and accessible to the reader. In this text, James uses architecture to mirror his exploration into the construction of character.

The scene that occurs at the Palace of the Caesars suggests every facet of Daisy's character through architectural and narrative detail: Winterbourne's constructed image of her virtue, his underlying conception of her moral failings (also perceived by members of her social circle,) and her true innocence. These layers are interwoven and yet distinct. Throughout the text, Winterbourne falsifies his experiences with Daisy, manipulating her

[94] James, 51.

character and fabricating his descriptions of their outings in order to erect a nonrepresentational image of her physical niceties and absolute moral virtue. There are several of these imagined scenes throughout James's text, and the Palace of the Caesars alludes to each of them. Underlying this constructed image of Daisy lies Winterbourne's true belief in her sexual culpability. Though he is constantly attesting to Daisy's "very innocent" character, a result of her "very ignorant" upbringing, Winterbourne connects the girl with representations of moral laxity frequently in the text, and is immediately persuaded of her lewdness at the Colosseum.

Finally, buried beneath the rest is the truth of Daisy's character—a quality that James himself has accounted for, though the author is rarely forthcoming. In a letter to a questioning reader, however, he asserted,

> Poor little DM was (as I understand her) above all things innocent…she was a flirt, a perfectly superficial and unmalicious [sic] one. The keynote of her character is her innocence. The whole idea of the story is the little tragedy of a light, thin, natural, unsuspecting creature being sacrificed, as it were, to a social rumpus that went quite over her head and to which she stood in no measurable relation.[95]

In this letter, written in 1880 (two years after he first published "Daisy Miller") James effectively solves any discussion of Daisy's character. The author's response was in part a reaction to the backlash resulting from audiences calling the story "an outrage on American girlhood."[96] Though her innocence is the widely accepted modern construal, nineteenth-century audiences were predisposed to assume Daisy's culpability. One critic

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[95] Henry James, "Letter to Eliza Lynn Linton, October 06, 1880," from *Henry James: A Life in Letters,* ed. by Phillip Horne (London: Penguin Books, 1999), 121-122.

[96] Sarah Wadsworth, "What Daisy Knew: Reading Against Type in *Daisy Miller: A Study*," in *A Companion to Henry James*, edited by Greg W. Zacharias, West Sussex: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2008, 33.

adds to this reaction with the statement that "a survey of the criticism and scholarship on *Daisy Miller* suggests that only gradually have readers shaken off the prejudices of this close-knit clique and made way for generally positive and sympathetic readings of Daisy's character."[97] Regardless, the scene at the Palace of the Caesars connects Daisy with elements in the scene that emphasize her vulnerability, youth, and emotional delicacy.

Winterbourne's use of "pretty" to describe Daisy at the Palace of the Caesars serves to connect her with his fabricated image of her "light" childishness (Fig 3.1). [98] As opposed to previous interactions between the two characters, Winterbourne and Daisy meet at the Palace by chance rather than as a result of predetermined planning. Winterbourne "encounters" Daisy and Giovanelli "in that beautiful abode of flowering desolation known as the Palace of the Caesars," and this accidental meeting refuses Winterbourne the opportunity to concoct his image of how the interaction will occur. The reader therefore is privy to a more honest description of Daisy's actions, and yet the use of several key words ("pretty" among them) suggests that the young American man is not entirely without his preconceptions. Winterbourne is often distracted by Daisy's physical beauty, and his use of such a sweet, plain word suggests an idealized version of the girl, which he evokes in situations that seem to demand the inclusion of a charming nature. For example, at the Palace of the Caesars he states, "it seemed to him, also, that Daisy had never looked so pretty; but this had been an observation of his whenever he met her."[99] Although Winterbourne's use of "pretty" is pervasive throughout the story, he

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[97] Ibid.
[98] Henry James, *Daisy Miller,* 51.
[99] Ibid.

applies it in contexts where he romanticizes his female companion. James's diction at the Palace is significant, as the author's word choice evokes one specific conception of Daisy's character for the reader.

The most potent example of Winterbourne's idealized image of Daisy occurs when he arrives in Rome and is subsequently disappointed by his perception of Daisy's indifferent attitude. The narrator notes,

> The news that Daisy Miller was surrounded by half a dozen wonderful mustaches checked Winterbourne's impulse to go straightaway to see her…An image had lately flitted in and out of his own meditations; the image of a very pretty girl looking out of an old Roman window and asking herself urgently when Mr. Winterbourne would arrive.[100]

In this scene, Winterbourne completely fabricates Daisy's desires, drawing evidence not from his experiences with her, but instead from his own fanciful imagination concerning the strength of emotion in their previous encounter. He strongly romanticizes her character when he places her in such a typical sentimental posture. "Very pretty" is not forcefully descriptive by any means, and while he consistently refers to her "pretty eyes" or her "pretty figure," he does not often go into specific details about her attractive qualities. Thus he presents the reader with a somewhat generic portrait of a girl at a window—but not just any window. The aperture is specifically "old" and "Roman," two details that when combined suggest a quaint, picturesque atmosphere perfect for his idealized scene.

Winterbourne's constant use of "pretty" also indicates his misunderstanding of Daisy's nature. Often in the face of accusations towards her character, Winterbourne will cite her physical attractiveness as proof of her innocence. For example, when his aunt

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[100] James 29.

declares her unrespectable, he says, "she is completely uncultivated…but she is wonderfully pretty." In a sense, it seems that Daisy's social immaturity only enhances Winterbourne's superficial attraction to her. The word also indicates Winterbourne's misunderstanding of Daisy's character. When confronted directly with accusations of promiscuity or recklessness, Daisy reacts in a manner that conveys her shock and embarrassment to the reader—a trend that makes itself known to the reader through descriptions of her blush. When Mrs. Walker accuses her of impulsiveness, Daisy blushes, to which Winterbourne reacts with a "she was tremendously pretty." The appearance of "pretty" in such a climactic scene at the Palace not only indicates a facet of Winterbourne's fatal misconception of Daisy's character, but also suggests an image of her innocence constructed by her American 'friend.'

Underlying Winterbourne's representation of Daisy as pure, chaste, and innocent resides a darker conception of her indubitable culpability. At several points throughout the story he makes offhand comments that hint at an undisclosed dissatisfaction with Daisy's behavior. For example, in her statement "you are very preoccupied; you are thinking of something…of that young lady's…intrigue with that little barber's block," his aunt suggests that he preoccupies himself with thinking of Daisy and her assumed Italian lover, Giovanelli. In response, Winterbourne responds bitingly, "do you call it an intrigue, an affair that goes on with such peculiar publicity?"[101] The young man's frustration at his scorned 'feelings' is palpable in this line. More convincing is the consideration of her character that he allows himself before their informal meeting at the Palace of the Caesars: after musing on her "light…uncultivated" nature, he abruptly

[101] James 48.

switches tacks with an utterance that seems too strong to be a result of abstract contemplation: "he believed that she carried about in her irresponsible little organism a defiant, passionate, perfectly observant consciousness of the impression she produced." Following this line is a statement that strongly cements the belief that Winterbourne defends Daisy's innocence for social, rather than honest, purposes. He states, "It must be admitted that holding one's self to a belief in Daisy's 'innocence' came to seem to Winterbourne more and more a matter of finespun gallantry."[102]

Winterbourne's repressed judgment of Daisy's character is alluded to at the Palace of the Caesars when he compares the girl to the city of Rome (Fig 3.2). The unnamed narrator states, "the early Roman spring had filled the air with bloom and perfume…it seemed to [Winterbourne] that Rome had never been so lovely." Several lines later, this sentence is seemingly continued with Winterbourne's internal thought that "Daisy had never looked so pretty." The direct comparison between Daisy and the city strikes an odd chord with the reader, especially given James's own accounts of Rome's unsavory nineteenth-century atmosphere.[103] The story nevertheless makes a direct syntactical connection between Daisy and the city, as the two sentences share his assertion that they "had never looked/been so" pretty and lovely. During James's time

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[102] James 51.

[103] For examples of this, see *Italian Hours* pages 450-475. Descriptions include accounts of the "darkness and dirt and decay," (*Italian Hours* 465), as well as the "dirt, the dreariness, [and] the misery" of the city (*Italian Hours* 450), and finally a direct reference to the common fear of sickness and disease during this time: "the Roman air… is not a tonic medicine, and it seldom suffers exercise to be all exhilarating" (*Italian Hours,* 443). For a more detailed discussion of nineteenth-century conceptions of Rome, see Priscilla L. Walton, "Roman Springs and Roman Fevers: James, Gender, and Transnational Dis-ease," in *Roman Holidays: American Writers and Artists in Nineteenth-Century Italy*, ed. Robert K. Martin and Leland S. Person (Iowa City: The University of Iowa Press, 2002), 140-158.

period, Rome was seen as a necessary stop on the Grand Tour, and yet also possessed a reputation for moral laxity. In Eric L. Haralson and Kendall Johnson's *Critical Companion to Henry James: A Literary Reference to his Life and Work*, the authors discuss a common interpretation of the three locations that "Daisy Miller" features: Geneva as representational of "staid morals," Rome of "moral laxity," and Vevey, Switzerland, as a synthesis of the two.[104] The subtle arrangement of words here links Daisy with the morally questionable city of James's time, a significant decision, as Daisy's moral virtue is in question throughout the story.

The final incarnation represented at the Palace of the Caesars is the most understated of the three: Daisy's true innocence. The inconspicuous appearance of this theme is appropriate given how strongly it is overrun by competing judgments in the text. Daisy's guiltlessness is equally difficult for the reader to apprehend, and yet a close reading of her 'morally ambiguous' situations suggests an honesty that supports James's assertion of her irreproachability. When characters ask questions of Daisy without directly noting their displeasure at her actions, Daisy responds "without a tremor in her clear little voice" or "without a shade of hesitation."[105] However, when Mrs. Walker makes her discontent known frankly, ("Should you prefer being thought a very reckless girl?") Daisy blushes visibly. [106] She further conveys her hurt with her non-response to Winterbourne's later reference to the scene, and although Winterbourne reflects that "he expected that in answer she would say something rather free" and heeds her tacit goodbye

[104] Eric Haralson and Kendall Johnson, *Henry James: A Literary Reference to His Life and Work* (New York: Facts on File Inc, 2009), 224.
[105] James 32, 33.
[106] James 39.

as she "only shook his hand, hardly looking at him," he thinks little of its meaning.[107] Their interaction on page forty-three cements this notion, as after Winterbourne's "frank" statement "if you are in love with [Giovanelli], it is another affair," Daisy gets up, "blushing visibly," and leaves him. [108] These two interactions, though fleeting, resonate with the reader as proof of Daisy's naïveté.

Daisy and Winterbourne's journey to Chillon Castle at the beginning of the story narrows the conception of Daisy's youth and immaturity—Daisy becomes more and more childlike in her motions and statements as the two characters move about the castle (Fig 3.3). As soon as they arrive, the narrator notes, "Daisy tripped about the vaulted chambers, rustled her skirts in the corkscrew staircases [and] flirted back with a pretty little cry and a shudder from the edge of the *oubliettes*."[109] Daisy's energy and ebullience suggests the image of a child at play, taking pleasure in the visual spectacle of the castle's architectural spaces. As they move through the castle, however, Daisy's statements become increasingly childlike and immature. She openly reproaches Winterbourne, and her repetitive complaints are strongly reminiscent of an adolescent ignorant of proper social interactions. "She broke out irreverently, 'You don't mean to say you are going back to Geneva?' 'It is a melancholy fact that I shall have to return tomorrow.' 'Well, Mr. Winterbourne, I think you're horrid…' And for the next ten minutes she did nothing but call him horrid."[110] Read in conjunction with Daisy's final scene at the Colosseum, her actions within the amphitheater echo this example of her naïveté and juvenility.

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[107] James 40.
[108] James 43.
[109] James 25.
[110] James 26.

Winterbourne's age is known (he is twenty-seven) and James even assigns Daisy's brother his seven years, but Daisy's age is never stated. The architectural and natural details at the Palace of the Caesars underscore the newness of the foliage growing atop the antiquated Palace, an emphasis that alludes to the inherent innocence resulting from Daisy's undefined youth. The "rugged surface of the Palatine" is "muffled with tender verdure," a description that has several significances. First, Winterbourne and Daisy traverse the heart of Rome's history, as supposedly the city was first founded on the hill. "Palatine" itself means 'palace,' and many rulers based their empires on the Palatine in order to associate themselves with the grandeur of Rome's ancient history. Thus the scene situates the two characters at the seat of ancient (and imperial) influence. This powerful perceivable antiquity directly opposes the new, vibrant vegetation that envelops it, while also acting as a foil for Daisy's own youth. The "tender verdure" here is meant to recall Daisy herself, as it's hard to ignore the logical connection between her botanical name and the plant life that surrounds her. James's use of 'tender' also suggests how easily Daisy is hurt, though questionably few of the characters understand her anxiety. The word also suggests youth, immaturity, and vulnerability, three words that seem to describe this incarnation of the girl. The descriptive details that James uses for the vegetation at the Palace (recalling Daisy as a result of her namesake) therefore suggest a distinct youth and innocence at the core of James's character.

The continuous discussion of elements that cover or enclose one another within the scene at the Palace of the Caesars is strongly reminiscent of the different layers of Daisy's character, as well as the ambiguity of her situation (Fig. 3.4). Natural elements enclose rough stone, smoothing the "rugged" surface of the ruins on the Palatine: a

multivalent metaphor that could refer to several distinct interpretations. The jagged edges of the ruins compose an uneven surface, which may represent the irregularity in James's presentation of Daisy's character, or perhaps the disunion between her actions (culpable) and her true sentiment (innocent.) It may also represent the immoral attitude that her social circle believes defines her, which is subsequently muffled and calmed by the reality of her character—her inherent youth, freshness, and vulnerability, represented by the natural elements that crown the hill. Despite the pervasiveness of nature, however, the rugged edges (the "desolation") still show through. This scene is especially hard to define, as part of Daisy's character is the ambiguity of her situation, which this setting strongly emphasizes. James's attention to the divergent elements of the Palace asserts a similarity between the scene's setting and Daisy's own ambiguity: the place echoes the confusion of her character.

This discussion of verdant, impermanent foliage growing on ancient stone brings to light a focus on the juxtaposition of contrasting elements. The emphasis on seemingly contradictory features existing and developing in unison with one another strongly recalls Daisy's own crisis of character within the scene. This side-by-side existence is brought to the reader's attention at the opening of the segment, as Winterbourne encounters Daisy at "that beautiful abode of flowering desolation known as the Palace of the Caesars." 'Flowering desolation' is an contradictory descriptive term, as 'desolate' denotes a state of complete emptiness or destruction, while flowers suggest new life and beauty (as well as our title character.) Moreover, Winterbourne's pleasure at feeling the "freshness of the year and the antiquity of the place reaffirm themselves in mysterious interfusion" indicates an amalgam much like the one physically represented in the stonework's mossy

coat: the Palace ruins embody both new life (the reality of a new spring) as well as a sense of history and time past. It is also significant that the two elements assert their influence as one, despite their inherent disunion. This line suggests James's curiosity concerning one structure's dual participation in past and present. The Palace setting represents both freshness and age, and yet the narrator (and perhaps the author as well) admits to the 'mystery' behind this interfusion.[111]

This 'mysterious interfusion,' coupled with the ambiguity inherent in the scene, is strongly present during Winterbourne and Daisy's interaction at the Colosseum (Fig. 3.5). Wandering about by himself in the late evening, Winterbourne decides to stop at the Colosseum for, as he says, "the interior, in the pale moonshine, would be well worth a glance." He steps inside through the "cavernous shadows of the great structure," and though he can hardly see through the thick darkness, he manages to make out the shape of the cross positioned in the center (Fig. 3.6). James writes, "the great cross in the center was covered with shadow; it was only as he drew near it that he made it out distinctly. Then he saw that two persons were stationed upon the low steps which formed its base."[112] The figures are Daisy and Giovanelli, and Winterbourne reprimands them (especially Giovanelli) for their late-night jaunt, citing Daisy's vulnerability. Winterbourne's statement, as well as his earlier concern for his own health, indicates that Americans are susceptible to the malaria that presumably dwells within the Colosseum, while Italians are not. His attention to the Colosseum's structure and the play of light and dark within the space add significance to his erroneous epiphany concerning Daisy's character.

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[111] James 51.
[112] Ibid.

Much like the Palace of the Caesars, the Colosseum also indicates an interest in elements of the structure that possess qualities seemingly distinct from one another. A fundamental set of dualities rests in the physical description of the amphitheater. James makes this distinction clear when he describes the interior of the building: "one-half of the gigantic circus was in deep shade, the other was sleeping in the luminous dusk."[113] Despite the outright assertion of two distinct sides with supposedly individual qualities, however, the distinction here is vague. Darkness defines both sides of the Colosseum, and yet the oxymoronic phrase 'luminous dusk' indicates a state of darkness that is interwoven with luminescence from the moonlight. Again two contrasting elements—light and dark—mix in a "mysterious interfusion."

This bizarre quality of light emphasizes Winterbourne's crisis of perception within the scene. When Winterbourne enters the amphitheater, he can only see the forms of "two persons stationed upon the low steps" of the cross at the Colosseum's center. Daisy's voice is the only part of her that emerges through the shadow—immediately following her words, Winterbourne makes his climactic judgment on her character.

> Winterbourne stopped, with a sort of horror, and, it must be added, with a sort of relief. It was as if a sudden illumination had been flashed upon the ambiguity of Daisy's character, and the riddle had become easy to read. She was a young lady whom a gentleman need no longer be at pains to respect. He stood there looking at her—looking at her companion, and not reflecting that though he saw them vaguely, he himself must have been more brightly visible.[114]

The clear attention here to distinct and indefinite forms (a consequence of the light acting on the amphitheater) is strongly evocative of Winterbourne's crisis of perception in regards to Daisy's character. The only light that shines on Daisy during this interaction is

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[113] James 54.
[114] Ibid.

the metaphorical "sudden illumination" when Winterbourne discovers what he believes to be the 'truth' of her character. For the rest of the scene, however, she is primarily enveloped in darkness. Her shadowy figure suggests several interpretations, but one most distinctly: in this scene, Winterbourne believes he's arrived at an understanding of her character, and yet she remains literally shrouded in shadow. This suggests that as Winterbourne reaches what he believes is a true understanding of Daisy, the truth of her character is drawn away from him into darkness. Likewise, the description indicates that Winterbourne is "more brightly visible," which supports the previous claim of his belief in her culpability. As he finally allows these emotions free rein, the light illuminates him. The interfusion present within the description of the Colosseum therefore evokes the confused atmosphere within the amphitheater, as various mental and moral characters are simultaneously realized, falsely accused, and fatally smothered.

The light and shadow that act on Daisy's figure are significant, as her illuminated or darkened figure metaphorically symbolizes her evoked or hidden nature. Despite her desire to see the Colosseum in the moonlight, Daisy herself is only illuminated in one fleeting statement, where she attests to the visual beauty of the place. Winterbourne observes, "Daisy, lovely in the flattering moonlight, looked at him a moment. Then – 'All the evening,' she answered, gently…'I never saw anything so pretty.'"[115] The inclusion of the delicate 'gently' lends this statement its strikingly simple and truthful impression. It appears that Daisy is sincere throughout their interaction, and yet her other statements, despite their honesty, are strikingly naïve. Here, light illuminates Daisy's figure at what appears to be a moment of maturity—in response to Winterbourne's

[115] James 55.

"brutal" question, ("How long have you been here?") she pauses, apparently noting his tone, and though her statement is hardly different from her other utterances, the pauses in James's syntax indicates a change. Daisy's figure is thus reminiscent of the Colosseum's described shade: part of her remains in complete obscurity, while this simple moment of luminescence indicates the coming-of-age that awakens only momentarily in the "luminous dusk." Light here acts on the structure and the characters in a similar way: while part of the Colosseum remains in deep obscurity, part of it 'sleeps' in illuminated darkness. Likewise Daisy's true nature, momentarily brought to light, ultimately sinks back into shadow with her death. She remains shrouded in darkness: despite the appearance of the truth, Daisy remains in obscurity.

The combination of light and shadow is reminiscent of Daisy herself, as the girl represents a combination of conceptions and judgments of nature: both innocence (freshness) and moral laxity (the constraints of social tradition.) Ultimately it is difficult to make a definitive statement about the state of Daisy's character or the morals underlying the story, as James purposefully fills his text with ambiguities, contradictions, and the ever-present trope of one entity comprised of seemingly contradictory elements, and yet this multivalence is part of what defines Daisy's character. At the Palace of the Caesars, Daisy strolls along the top of moss-covered ruins as Winterbourne attests to the "enchanting harmony" of the Roman spring, while the past and present simultaneously assert their presence within the amalgamation that represents Rome. James's focus on juxtapositions in the climactic scenes at the Palace of the Caesars and the Colosseum (as well as the contrasting components in the architecture surrounding Daisy) indicates a quality inherent in Daisy's own character: like the structures that surround her, she

represents a 'mysterious interfusion' of individual traits. Not only is she innocent, but she also bears the weight of other people's conceptions of her, which begin to fuse with the reality of her character. She becomes an intersection between the two discordant characteristics, as she dies with two distinct understandings of her identity: her innocence, which Giovanelli attests to and Winterbourne realizes, though too late, and her moral laxity. James constructs his narrative around Daisy so that she represents every piece of her character: despite his assertion that she is innocent, in the eyes of her social circle she is promiscuous, so that conception inherently becomes a part of her character.

The Colosseum also represents a duality between aesthetic beauty and death that is evident in James's text, as its aesthetic appeal proves deadly for his main character. Daisy is not the only American drawn to the amphitheater at midnight: the building was a magnet for artists and tourists alike during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, all who praised its unique aesthetic quality. In *The Aesthetic of Ruins,* Robert Ginsberg recounts some of these visitors, the likes of which include Stendhal, Edgar Allan Poe, Charles Dickens, Mark Twain, and Edith Wharton. Together they proclaimed the Colosseum "the most beautiful of ruins" noting that "it is perhaps more beautiful today now that it is fallen in ruin that it ever was in all its splendor…its solitude, its awful beauty, its utter desolation…is the most impressive…the dusky secret mass!"[116] Nathaniel Hawthorne devotes an entire scene to a moonlit visit to the amphitheater, though his Colosseum is much more populated than James's, with groups of American tourists lounging on "Roman altars" and "Christian shrines" alike.[117] Even

[116] Robert Ginsberg, *The Aesthetics of Ruins.* New York, NY: Rodophi, 2004, 116-117.
[117] Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Marble Faun: Or, the Romance of Monte Beni* (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1883), 182-183.

Winterbourne (a self-titled "lover of the picturesque") cannot refuse a moonlit visit, despite his awareness of the "villainous miasma" (malaria) that supposedly lurked within its walls.

This deadly 'Roman Fever' is part of the Colosseum's identity in James's story, and Daisy supposedly suffers and dies after she contracts it. However, the author also makes reference to the building's earlier history, confirming the structure's strange juxtaposition of meaning within the story, as it represents visual, aesthetic pleasure as well as death and sacrifice. James refers to the building's earlier history when Daisy says, "well, he looks at us as one of the old lions or tigers may have looked at the Christian martyrs!"[118] The building's gladiatorial usage is well known, and yet it was a common thought during the nineteenth century that the site was also consecrated with the blood of martyrs massacred before the rise of Christianity.[119] Although there is no modern evidence for this idea, it was well known that the Romans crucified Peter in the Circus of Nero, a site now covered by St. Peter's. Early Christians also used the Colosseum's structure as a burial ground, a rumor for which evidence exists, as tombs have been found in the amphitheater's foundation. Its significance for the story is therefore not contained to Daisy's appreciation of its beauty, but the structure also represents death and martyrdom. The Colosseum's history at the time, which emphasized the structure as a location for sacrifice, closely mirrors Daisy's fate. This connection between martyrs and Daisy is undeniable, as the girl is "cruelly sacrificed by

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[118] James 54.

[119] Candida R. Moss, *Ancient Christian Martyrdom: Diverse Practices, Theologies, and Traditions.* New London: Yale University Press, 2012, 23.
For more information, see Matilda Webb, *The Churches and Catacombs of Early Christian Rome: A Comprehensive Guide.* Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2001.

expatriated snobs."[120] Once again aesthetic beauty proves problematic for James, as Daisy enters the structure for visual pleasure and leaves with her fate sealed.

James's description of Daisy within the Colosseum suggests that her innocence and naïveté have a hand in deciding her fate. In the late nineteenth century, most readers believed that Daisy's death resulted from her promiscuity—a line of thought that necessitates the girl's awareness of her actions. An analysis of her interaction with the amphitheater itself, however, reveals a different impetus. Her desire to witness the Colosseum's beauty by moonlight draws her to the place, and yet it is her innocence and ignorance of danger that instigates her visit. James indicates her lack of awareness with a line reminiscent of earlier statements expressive of her ignorance. When they are left alone in the amphitheater, Giovanelli having gone to fetch the carriage, Winterbourne notes, "she seemed not in the least embarrassed." Daisy's lack of perceptible embarrassment indicates that she truly feels no discomfort in their situation. Earlier circumstances made it clear that Winterbourne at least records small physical anomalies that indicate her distress, such as a blush, and the lack of those qualities here conveys her blamelessness. However, while her ignorance leads her to the Colosseum, James's text implies a different reason for her death.

Daisy's death at the end of the story occurs after her desire to partake in the visual grandeur of the amphitheater. As a result, it appears that Daisy's pleasure in the spectacle is what leads to her demise. Daisy indicates her interest in the aesthetic appeal of the Colosseum when she declares, "I was bound to see the Colosseum by moonlight; I shouldn't have wanted to go home without that; and we have had the most beautiful

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[120] Haralson and Johnson, 222.

time."[121] This line suggests that the visual appeal—indicated by her use of 'see'—of the amphitheater is what attracted her to the site. Again James complicates the viewer's relationship with a visually appealing subject—in this story, he suggests the danger involved in the aesthetic appreciation of an ancient object. In the end, Daisy dies as a result of her desire to witness the picturesque embodied within the Colosseum, a theme strongly reminiscent of James's "Travelling Companions," where the narrator concerns himself with the visual appreciation of objects as divorced from their latent meaning. In this scene, Daisy solely invests herself in the visual spectacle of the amphitheater. One brief statement by her, however, offers an alternate interpretation.

Winterbourne's use of "pretty" to describe Daisy similarly indicates his attention to her physical details, and he uses the word often enough to drill the conjunction between her figure and this particular descriptive term into the reader. Within the Colosseum, however, Daisy uses "pretty" to describe the amphitheater itself. It is the only time throughout the entire story that Daisy uses the word. Asked how long she's been at the Colosseum, she says, "All the evening…I never saw anything so pretty." The syntactical connection between her figure and the structure fortifies the earlier association between her character and the Colosseum, where the amphitheater's features mirrored her composite character. Furthermore, the link between James's interpretation of the amphitheater's use—sacrifice of gladiators, if not of martyrs—suggests that the place is more representative of Daisy's character than previously assumed. James's story concerns itself with the definition and misinterpretation of character, and as such, Daisy's

[121] James, 55.

desire to "see" the Colosseum indicates a self-knowledge that James's story condemns with her subsequent death.

Both Daisy's and Winterbourne's absorption in visual qualities (for Daisy, the Colosseum, and for Winterbourne, Daisy's countenance,) is reminiscent of James's earlier "Travelling Companions." Winterbourne makes no secret of his attraction to Daisy's physical appeal: his continual referral to her as "pretty" and his attention to her "pretty eyes," her "charming nose," and her "pretty teeth" indicates a strong preoccupation with her pleasing visual qualities. Likewise, Daisy's attraction to the visual spectacle of the Colosseum leads to her end. In "Travelling Companions," James's narrator concerns himself with the interior splendor of San Marco as a means through which to reach a significant experience. The appearance of Charlotte Evans complicates this focus, as her visual "effects" distract the narrator from his attempt to engage fully with the structure. In both stories, then, James notes the appeal of Italian architectural structures and the difficulty that results from a purely visual engagement with the structure.

"Daisy Miller" also suggests the continuation of a theme from James's "Last of the Valerii," written eight years earlier: the relationship between the past and present in Rome. The image of nature growing on ancient stone at the Palace of the Caesars is strongly reminiscent of the narrator's description of the Pantheon in "Last of the Valerii," an indication that the juxtaposition of new life and old ruin still captivates James's imagination. Though the Palace is in ruins, it still aids in elucidating Daisy's character, in part because of the greenery that covers it. Both scenes convey a strange coexistence of past and present, and yet the sad fact of the greenery at the Palace is its ephemerality: it is

doomed to end, while the Palace stones will endure. The connection between this metaphor and Daisy hardly needs to be explicated—although she is doomed to die within the last pages of James's story, Rome remains.

Conclusion

"Well," said I, "we shall certainly cease to be here,
but we shall never cease to have been here."[122]

James's short stories set in Italy lend clarity to the image of an American abroad in the late nineteenth century. All three of the stories discussed in this project indicate his attention and scrutiny to Italian constructions, both architectural and sculptural, a focus that stems from the author's participation in an American cultural history. While James's texts hint at the social impact of Italy on American travelers, his letters from the time proffer a conception of his social and cultural anxieties. His correspondences reveal concerns that closely align with themes elucidated through this project's analysis of James's architectural description.

James's letters illuminate the author's sentiments during the 1870s, when he wrote the three stories that this project focuses on. Although "Travelling Companions" is the second chapter in this compilation, it is the first story chronologically, coming out of James's first trip to the country. In his letters, James conveys his frustration with his compatriots in a scathing review of their "ignorance" and their "stingy, defiant, grudging attitude towards everything European." James has little desire to interact with fellow Americans, and most striking in his condemnation of their character abroad is their "incredible lack of culture."[123] His distaste for the traveling American only increased with age, and he seemed to believe that his American cultural heritage prevented him

[122] James, "Travelling Companions," 23.
[123] Henry James, "Letter to his Mother, October 13, 1869," from *The Letters of Henry James,* ed. By Percy Lubbock (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), 21.

from "becoming an insider" overseas.[124] Most of his letters from 1869-1870, however, express his elation at his exposure to the ancient culture. The rapturous, exhaustive descriptions of San Marco and the Milan *Duomo* in "Travelling Companions" convey this pleasure. His narrator's arrival in Venice at the beginning of "Travelling Companions" closely resembles his own sentiments and the "fever" of enjoyment that overtook him in Rome. The narrator declares, "the day succeeding my arrival I spent in a restless fever of curiosity and delight."[125]

Four years later, the author's letters convey his desire to sink into Italian culture, but his awareness at the impossibility. Writing to his friend Grace Norton, he says, "we belong much more to that [America] than [Italy], and stand in a much less factitious and artificial relation to it. I feel forever how Europe keeps me at an arm's length, condemning one to a meagre scraping of the surface." Around this time James considers the power of one's cultural history as it prevents him from sinking as fully into the Italian heritage as he'd like. Even someone so attuned to Italian life, he says, "doesn't find an easy initiation into what lies beneath it."[126] The notion of buried desires evokes an image of the Juno: Valerio also struggles with the power of his cultural history, but the count in "The Last of the Valerii" is so conscious of his history that it seduces him. The narrator in "The Last of the Valerii" also expresses a somewhat perverse desire to fall under a spell similar to Valerio's—a scene that reveals James's awareness of the American desire to incorporate into Italy's cultural history. Additionally, Martha's relationship with

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[124] Henry James, "Letter to William James, May 1, 1878," from *The Letters of Henry James,* ed. By Percy Lubbock (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), 21-22.
[125] James, "Travelling Companions," 20.
[126] Henry James, "Letter to Miss Grace Norton, January 14, 1874," from *The Letters of Henry James*, ed. By Percy Lubbock (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), 36.

Valerio represents the consequences that result from an American attempting to fully assimilate: Martha is attracted to Valerio because of his Italian legacy, which she conveys through her attention to his sculptures, and yet she strangely represents another danger for Valerio—she instigates the curse, as she demands that they unearth the sculptures. She is the impetus for his madness, as her desire appropriate his cultural history exposes him to the relics that ensnare him. James here reflects on the impossibility of a true integration, and imagines the ruination that would ensue from an attempt.

By the time of "Daisy Miller," James's letters indicate that he has lost his desire to fully incorporate himself into Italian culture. The country and its relics still attract him (in 1877 he writes, "Italy is still her irresistible, ineffable old self") and yet the degradation of the American social circle within Rome lessens its appeal.[127] Fully aware now of the futility in attempting to sink fully into Italy as an American, James in 1878 describes the degeneration of Americans who have stayed thirty years in Italy. "In Rome I found the relics and fragments of the ancient American group, which has been much broken up…the chief quality acquired by Americans who have lived thirty years in Italy seems to be a fierce susceptibility on the subject of omitted calls."[128] Here James describes the negative social impact that such a long, unfulfilled sojourn in Italy has on his compatriots. James picks up this theme in "Daisy Miller," published in 1878. The

[127] Henry James, "Henry James to Miss Grace Norton, December 15, 1877," from *The Letters of Henry James,* ed. by Percy Lubbock (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), 56.
[128] James, 57.

question of Daisy's character arises from their judgment of her virtuousness, and she is "sacrificed…to the social rumpus."[129]

James's use of architectural and sculptural constructions in these three stories reflects the author's social ruminations on the experience of Americans abroad. The impact of one's cultural history on an interaction with Italy can hardly be made more explicit than in James's own preoccupation with Italian architecture. Every structure discussed in these chapters has roots in the early history of Italy: from the Pantheon (first incarnation built in 27 BC) to the Milan *Duomo* and San Marco, both built on ninth-century foundations.[130] Architecture in Italy is a sign of cultural age, and therefore engrossing for a writer coming from the United States, a country without ancient ruins or an imperial history.

In Rome, evidence of the city's past grandeur is spread all around its inhabitants and visitors. Underlying the ruins' picturesque exterior is the observer's awareness of the ancient cultural past that they represent. The narrator's statement "we shall certainly cease to be here, but we shall never cease to have been here" sheds light on James's particular preoccupation with Italy's grand architecture in his writing. The immense structures in Italy are far divorced from any evidence of America's cultural history, and as such James finds himself drawn to the intimations of power evoked by the monumental constructions that Italy's history left behind. The phrase quoted above is naïve, as the narrator will cease to exist in the city, but the city will likely exist for a very

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[129] Henry James, "Henry James to Miss Eliza Lynn Linton, October 06, 1880," from *The Letters of Henry James,* ed. By Percy Lubbock (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), 122.

[130] Charles B. McClendon, *The Origins of Medieval Architecture: Building in Europe, A.D. 600-900,* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 13.

long time—he is only a "passionate human interlude" for something so enduring.[131] James emphasizes this tension in "Daisy Miller," as his continual juxtaposition between Daisy and Rome's ancient relics foregrounds her transience and stresses the stones' perpetuity. However, the narrator's statement, despite its naïveté, also suggests a focus that remains potent throughout the three texts analyzed here. The movement from "be" to "have been" indicates a shift from the concrete, external world to the internal sphere. With this statement James explores the mental stimulation that a physical journey to Italy elicits. For the author, the architecture of Italy provokes an anxiety concerning his search for meaning in something outside of himself.

[131] James, "Adina," 267.

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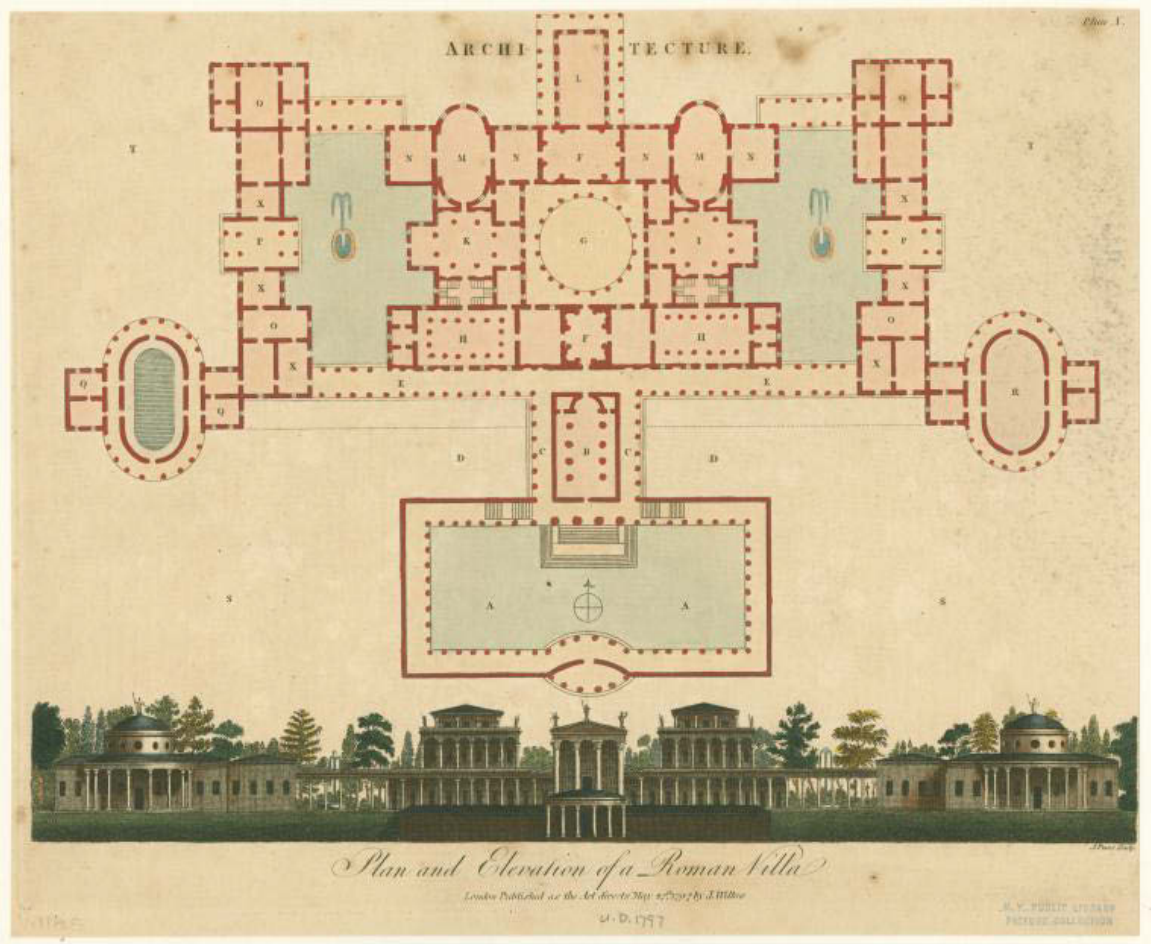

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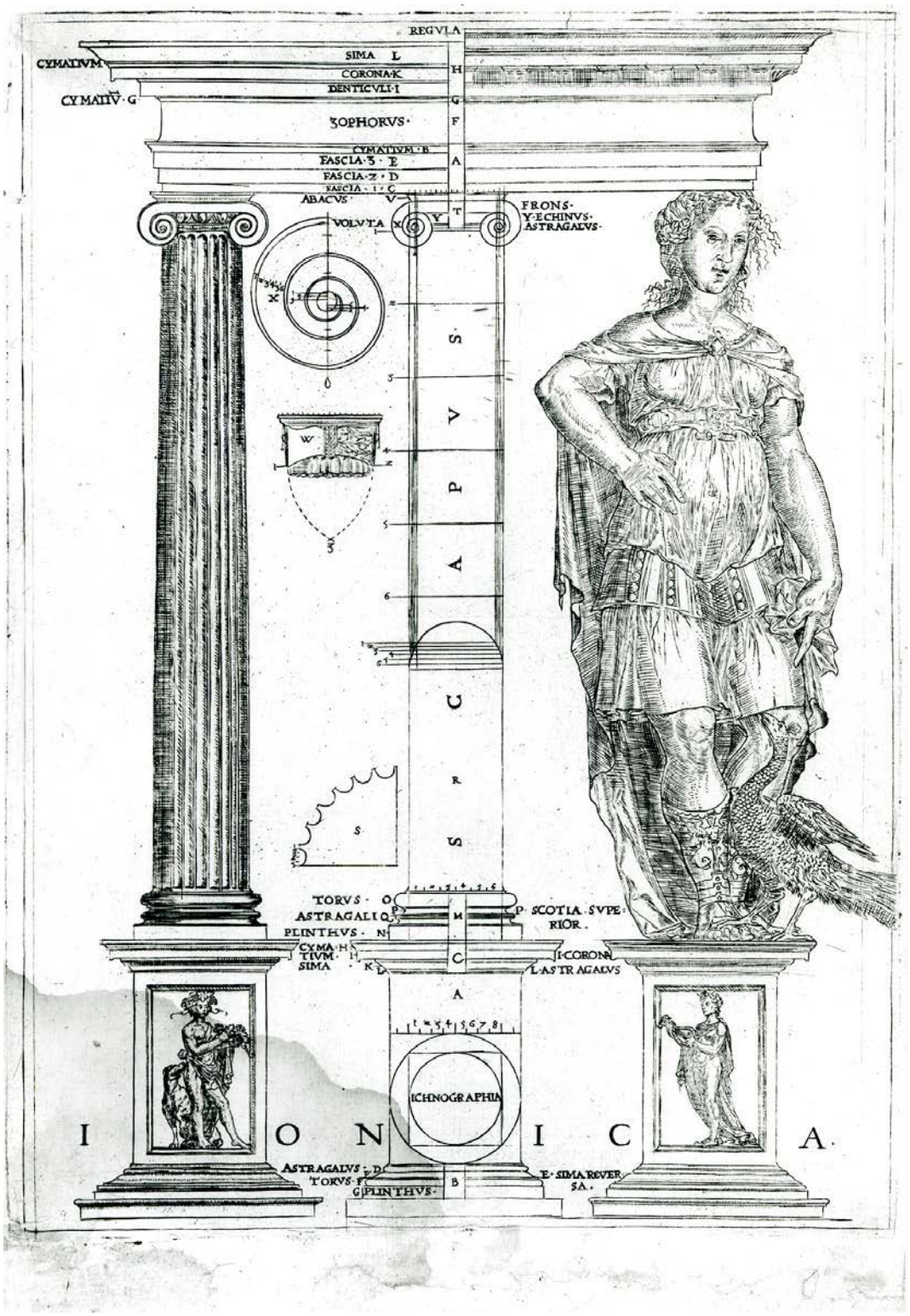

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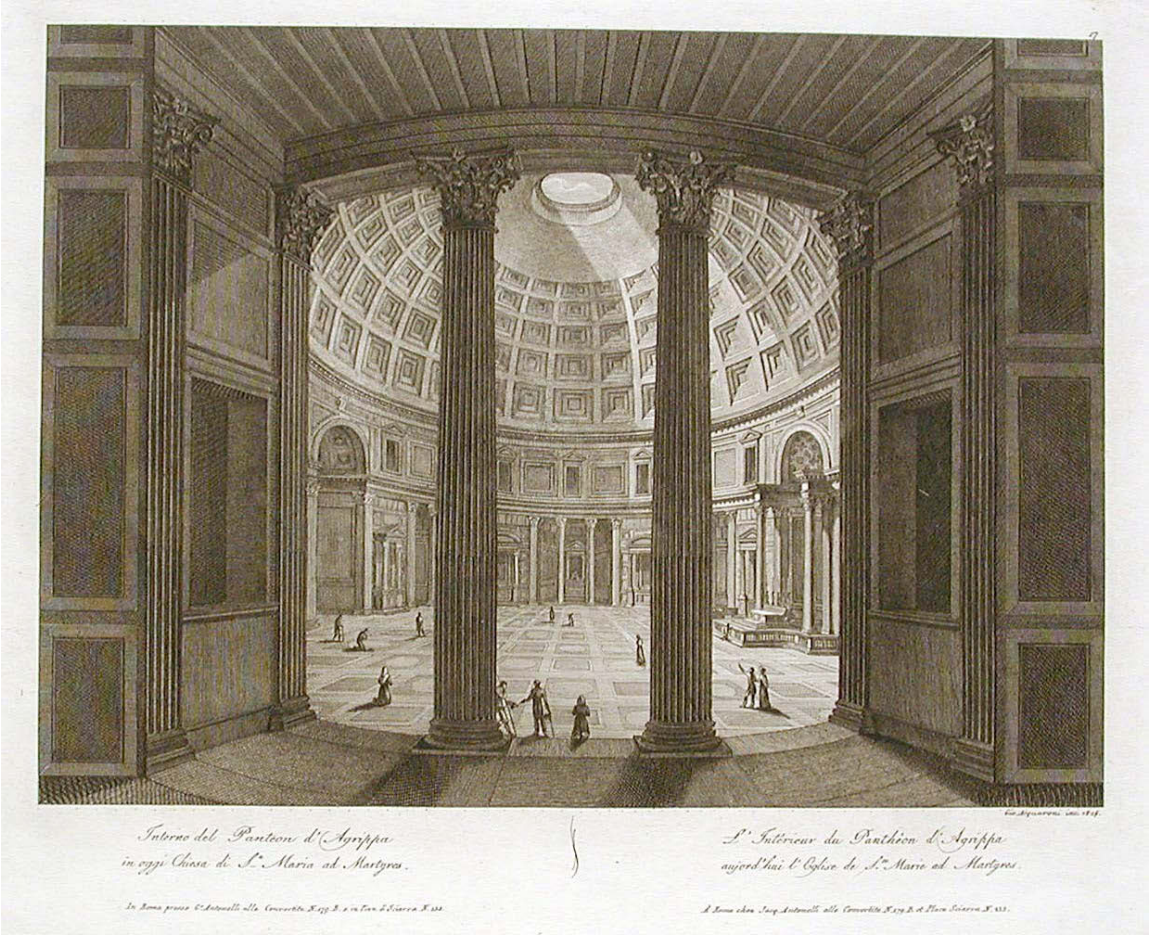

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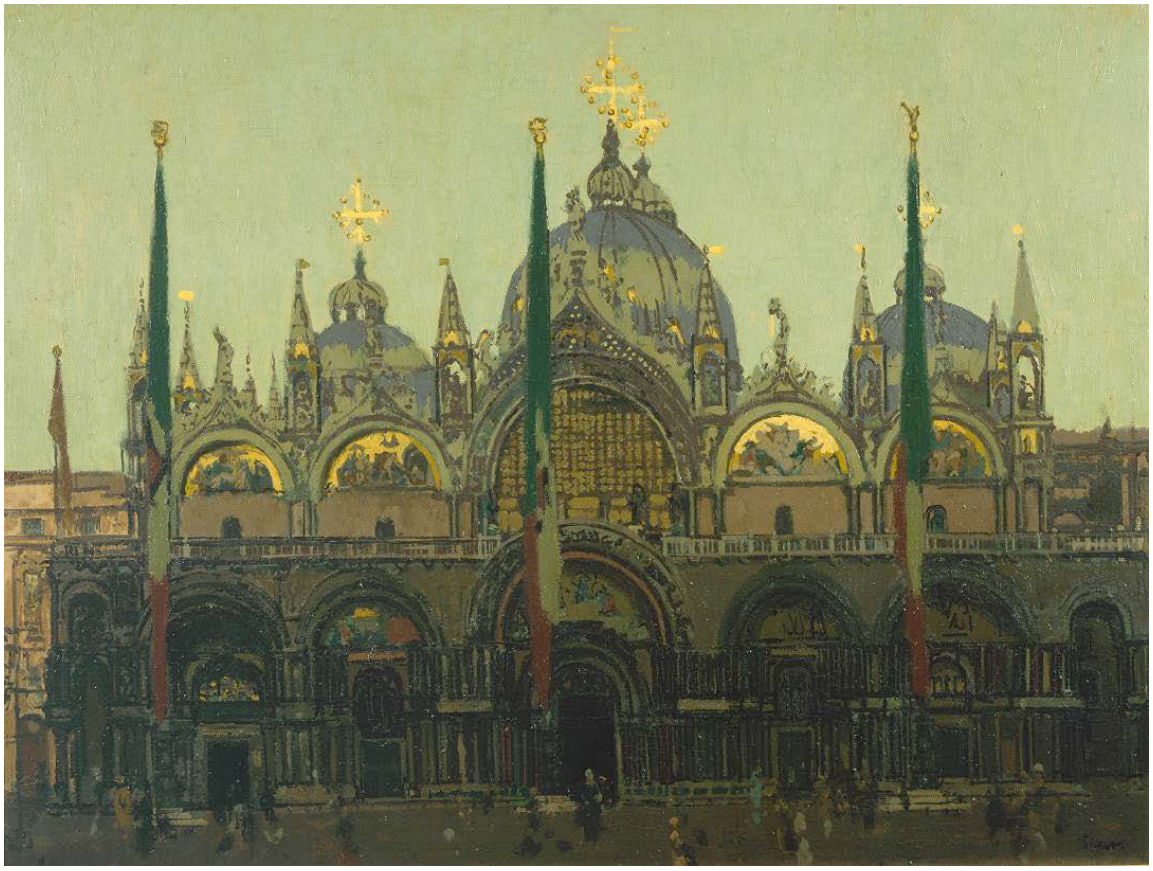

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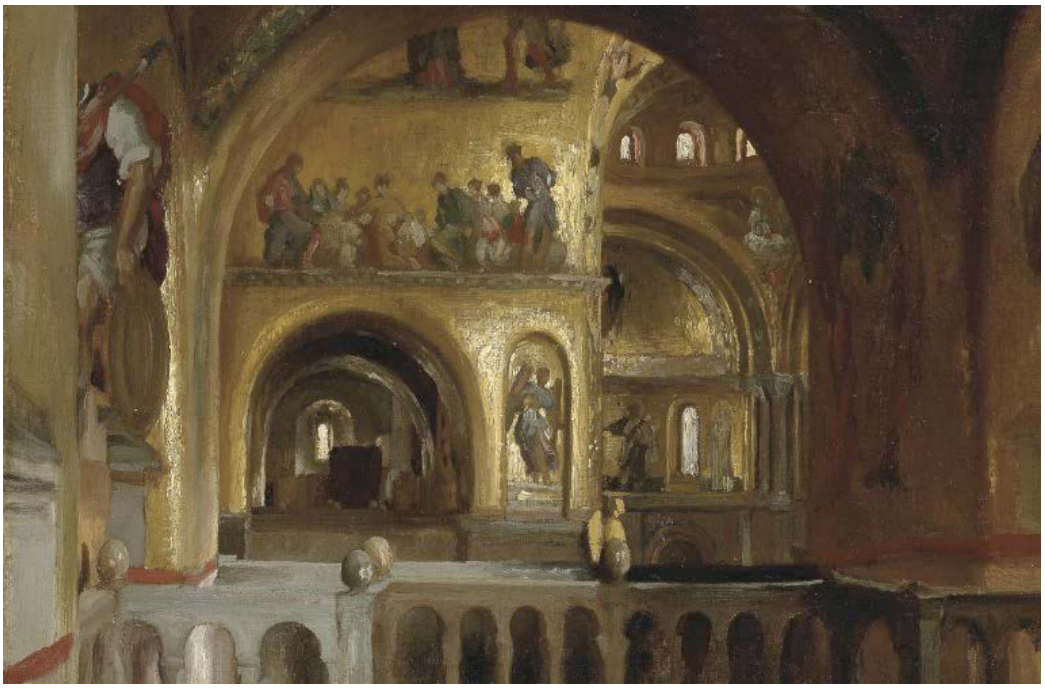

Figure 2.3: *The Interior of St. Mark's Basilica, Venice*. Frederic, Lord Leighton, P.R.A, circa 1895, oil paint.

Figure 2.4: *Pavement of St. Mark's*, John Singer Sargent, 1898, oil paint.

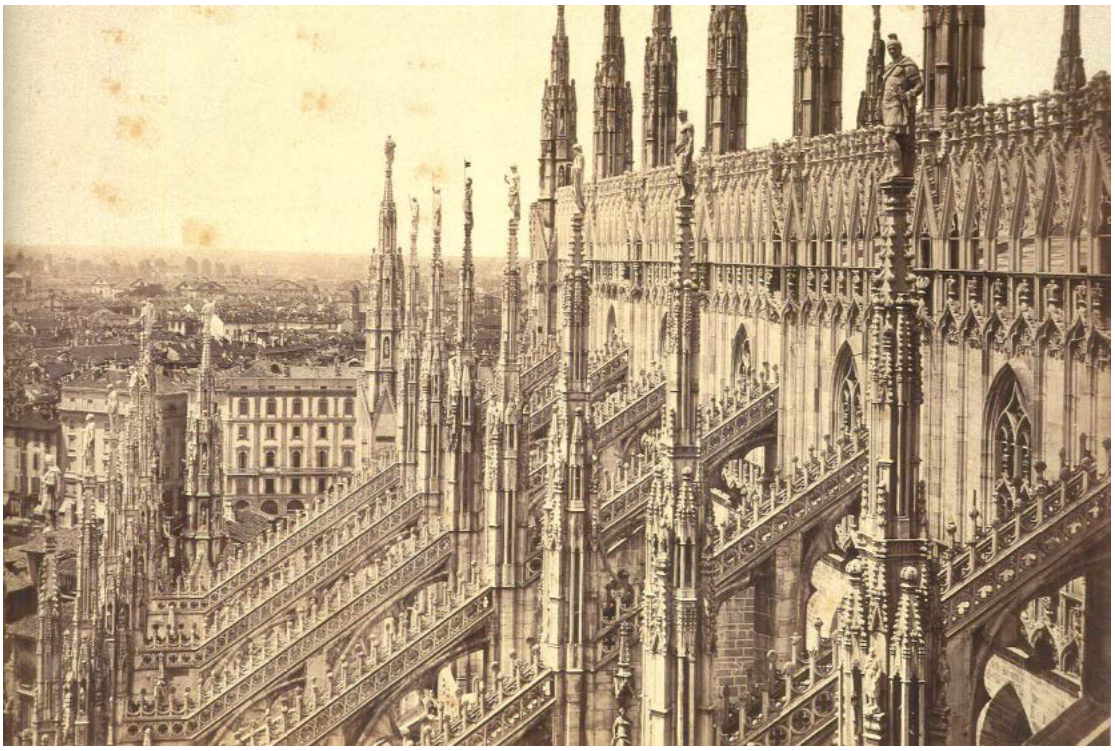

Figure 2.5: *Duomo di Milano*, circa 1850, photograph.

Figure 2.6: *Duomo di Milano II*, circa 1850, photograph.

Figure 3.1: *Ruins of the Palace of the Caesars in Rome*, Joseph Anton Koch, 1810, print

Figure 3.2: *Palace of the Caesars on the Palatine*, Robert MacPherson, 1860, photograph

Figure 3.3: *The Castle of Chillon*, W. Page, 1832, print

Figure 3.4: *Rome, Ruins of the Palace of the Caesars on the Palatine Hill*, James

Figure 3.5: *Colosseum*, 1874, photo

Figure 3.6: *Colosseum,* 1875, photo

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