CHAPTER IV

THE SHADE OF EUROPE
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The theme of the European in America is a dominant one in the fiction of Willa Cather. As already noted her most impressionable years were spent at Red Cloud and Lincoln in the company of immigrant Europeans, many of whom were widely read and cultivated. They introduced her to Continental and Classical literatures and thus the foundations of her wide reading were laid quite early. While her imagination was stirred by the conversation of immigrant women which helped in overcoming her nostalgia for Virginia, her intellect was nourished on the cultural tradition of Europe which is reflected in her treatment of the theme of the European in America. Marcus Cunliffe does not feel that the Populist outlook was crucial and enduring for her. He emphasizes that "The esthetic modes of the decade, which Mr. Randall also stresses, strike me as having fixed her attitudes in profounder ways." 1

She tried to achieve in her fiction a harmonic fusion of European culture and American experience. James Woodress has emphasized that her "importance lies in her ability to fuse the experience of America with the tradition of Europe in a series of superbly conceived and skilfully executed novels." 2 Like Henry James and Mark Twain she also was interested in bringing together the Old and the New worlds but instead of taking an innocent abroad and exposing him to the once rich but now decadent European culture she began with the impact of America on the poor immigrants, dealt with the impact of European culture on America and ended with the
impact of America on the educated European pioneers. As David D最后一次 noted:

"It may not be too far-fetched to see in Willa Cather's handling of the European-in-America theme a transmutation of one of James's major themes and thus to recognize James's legacy transplanted and put to new uses".

Europe stood for civilized sensibility, a heightened, varied enjoyment of life, possibility of earning one's livelihood out of one's intellectual and cultural achievements; a response to art; a sense of the past and of order. America on the other hand, represented nature and chaos, on which order could be conferred by the European influence. America was the land of vast potentialities where the heroic will could freely operate and create a paradise on earth. The heroic will, in order to represent a civilized sensibility, had to be European. Willa Cather rejected the Anglo-Saxon stock, that is her own, and, in her fiction Europe is continental Europe.

Upto 1910, Americans disliked the immigrants and, therefore, it was quite courageous of her to exalt the ethnic people to stand for old and deep and superior kind of people who were more tolerant of individualism.

Willa Cather was aware of the crude as well as the cultivated side of the immigrant Europeans, contrary to their clear-cut division according to the general notion - the old standing for those Americans who came from Eastern Seaboard Virginia stock, rich, cultivated, like Willa Cather herself, and the New standing for illiterate, dirty, poor
servant people, who were not well-spoken of. In her fiction the Old is also the New.

In Willa Cather's day the Europe-America polarity resolved itself as East-West and Town-Country polarity. New Englanders like Henry Adams observed that the whole country, West of Alleghenies might as well be scrapped. The Western type of man was thought dirty and a stay in the West was thought to cause regression into barbarism. The Westerners, by and large, being immigrants, suffered from a sense of inferiority, and those who could - at least, this was the view of the Easterners, - used to move to the East in order to earn more and lead a better life, and, in this way, show their talent. Sometimes, as in the case of William Dean Howells, the original feeling for the home place (Ohio) was lost and sometimes, like Bret Harte, the writer wrote about his childhood recollections, and earned his livelihood. Mark Twain's best fiction was the recreation of his childhood in Missouri but he did not go there except on visits.

Yet, the American West was an overshifting frontier and inspired people to consider it America's land of destiny - as the most American part of the United States - and, it was a forward-looking place. With Turner's paper The Significance of the Frontier in American History, it was established that the West did not consist of mere uncouth savages. Its crucible had transformed the heterogeneous immigrants into a new people. Willa Cather's early fiction made the Turner thesis real and that partly accounts for the immediate popularity of her prairie novels.
At the same time, the frontier disappeared with progress, while the East too declined, with the growing urbanization, industrialization and immigration. Thus, neither East, nor West, remained as they were thought to be — that is, the one standing for education, refinement and culture and the other for savagery on one hand and on the other the one standing for adventure and the other standing for a quiet, secure place.

The stages of civilization being Nomadic, Pastoral, Agricultural, Industrial and Commercial, the conflict was in the choice between the agricultural, that is, rural and the industrial and commercial represented by the city. The two offered opposing ideals of life. The writers of the period like Cooper were concerned with this choice, and Willa Cather too pondered over the problem, but, could not resolve it in her life, though in her fiction, she did try to resolve it. She emphasized the innate goodness of the individual, whether in town or country, east or west. She was aware of the merits and demerits of both, the town and the country; and ultimately sought a civilized countryside as her ideal. In her first novel, Alexander's Bridge, Willa Cather presented the Jamesian international situation as Alexander moved between Boston and London and an essential part of the novel's atmosphere depended upon the juxtaposition of the two worlds. The novel indicated her discoveries about the art of fiction rather than the material in which she was more at home.

Her second novel O Pioneers! introduced the theme of the European immigrants on the frontier and it persisted in her fiction,
though it is more prominent in *The Song of the Lark* and *My Antonia*.

In *One of Ours*, however, the American is exposed to the charms of Europe, that leads to an awakening in him, before he dies. The hero of the novel, Claude Wheeler, feels that all places are equally good and so long as people can die for the sake of an idea, there is hope for a better order in the world.

In *The Professor’s House*, Death comes for the Archbishop and *Shadows on the Rock* the merging of the two cultures is a prominent theme.

In Willa Cather’s fiction, the Europeans who came to America, with a view to get back what they lost at home, did not prosper. Similarly, those who continued to remain homesick, and did not accept the challenges of the New World also failed. Only those who accepted the New World and applied all their physical and mental resources to it were rewarded.

In *The Song of the Lark* Thesee recalls her mother saying that she “believed in Immigration” and so she too believed in it. “This earth seemed to her young and fresh and friendly, a place where refugees from Old, sad countries were given another chance.”

In *O Pioneers!* she introduced the theme of the European immigrants on the Frontier. John Bergson a Swede had continued a fruitless struggle on the land. He had not come, on his own, but on persuasion by his children, and in order that he might earn the fortune his father had lost in the old country. Obviously he lacked
the necessary qualifications to succeed on the frontier; and, he could not get reconciled to land.

In *My Antonia*, Mr. Shimerda, a cultured European, a well-read man, who was always consulted by priests in Bohemia, commits suicide because of homesickness. He has a strong sense of being far away from his home country and believes that "peace and order had vanished from the earth or existed only in the old world he had left so far behind." In the new country he never plays his horn or violin as he was wont to do in his home country. Like him Pavel and Peter also succumb to the rigours of the new country.

Professor Wunsch in *The Song of the Lark* is an immigrant German musician who is not reconciled to the new world and his one solace is the company of the Kohlers, fellow Germans, with whom he spends long hours drinking and talking of the old country. The past haunts them and prevents them from finding full satisfaction in America.

These old persons are driven to despair, decay and death because they are unable to reconcile to the new land or find in it a challenge to achieve themselves. In these early novels, according to David Daiches, "the impact of a young country on the sad sensitivity of uprooted Europeans is presented with a sympathy and an insight rare in American writers, even the most sophisticated of whom tend to regard the European immigrant as only too happy to leave the bad old world behind and settle down in the land of the free."
The alienation felt by the European immigrants is voiced by Crazy Ivär in *O Pioneers!*

"I am despised because I do not wear shoes, because I do not cut my hair, and because I have visions. At home, in the old country, there were many like me, who had been touched by God, or who had seen things in the grave yard at night and were different afterwards. We thought nothing of it, and let them alone. But here if a man is different in his feet or in his head, they put him in the asylum."  

Non-conformity was tolerated in America only if a person was rich. This proved by Alexandra's non-conformity which was accepted by society while Crazy Ivär's individuality was not accepted by society. His case indicated the direction America was to take as a country of conformity.

The immigrants too had their own differences and prejudices. Alexandra was conscious of her superiority as a Swede and considered herself more practical. In the same way, she was aware of greater potentialities of her brother - Emil,

"He's so different from the rest of us! More Swedish than any of us. He's going to have a chance, a whole chance; that's what I've worked for."  

In *My Antonia*, Otto says:

"Bohemians has a natural distrust of Austrians."
"...Well, ma'm, it's politics. It would take me a long while to explain."\textsuperscript{10}

"You can't tell me anything new about a Czech; I'm an Austrian."\textsuperscript{11}

Jake, a Virginian, shows distrust of the new-comers:

"These foreigners ain't the same. You can't trust 'em to be fair."\textsuperscript{12}

Thea in \textit{The Song of the Lark} is also conscious of being a Swede.

Archie tells her:

"Oh, a Swede can make good anywhere, at anything!

You've got that in your favour Miss"\textsuperscript{13} and she replies -

"Yes, I used to be ashamed of being a Swede, but I'm not anymore, Swedes are kind of common, but I think it's better to be something."\textsuperscript{14}

Willa Cather was concerned with the merging of cultures and backgrounds and it is the children of the immigrants who bring this about in her early novels. Alexandra, Thea and Antonia belong to the younger generation. They have the advantage of the European heritage and sensibility and the energy and adaptability to accept the challenges, excitement and possibilities of new life..."Americanism is Europeanism meeting the challenge of a new environment in its own terms,"\textsuperscript{15} according to David Daiches. Alexandra in \textit{O Pioneers!} represents her father, John Bergson, with the differences that qualify her to subdue the land and create the condition, in which her brother
Emil could have a chance in life. Emil is too much of a Swede, very violent, and he goes to an American university. Alexandra wants him to have an opportunity of exposure to culture, implying European culture, in towns; and be free from the rigours of life in the countryside, with its association with land. The merits and demerits of town and country are discussed by Carl and Alexandra.

In towns there is freedom and aesthetic enjoyment, while in the country one is tied to the land, and grows hard and heavy. But at the same time, there is a rootlessness in cities, Carl says:

"Freedom so often means that one isn't needed anywhere... we have notices, we know nobody, we own nothing. When one of us dies, they scarcely know where to bury him... and we leave nothing behind us but a frock-coat and a fiddle, or an easel, or a typewriter or whatever tool we got our living by."¹⁶

Yet, in spite of the advantages of being rooted in the soil, and owning property, Alexandra wishes her brother to grow like Carl, because the responsibilities in the rural America deadened one's aesthetic sensibilities.

In O Pioneers!, the advantages of both are attempted in the union of Carl and Alexandra. Their journey is to take them through the cultured life of San Francisco as well as the new frontier, and by the time they are to return to the Oliva it would no more be a frontier. But they are hardly the right sort to marry - she
is too robust and he is too ethereal and it seems to be more an asexual living together of friends, rather than normal marriage.

All the characters in *O Pioneers!* are either immigrants or their children. Swedish, Czech, German, and French are brought to intermingle and the new life on the Nebraska soil is related to the tension between the old world and the new. The frontier tradition as presented in *O Pioneers!* through the life of Alexandra becomes significant only when it can fruitfully interact with European memories and ideals.

In *My Antonia* the mantle of Mr. Shimerda falls on Jim, who responds to the suggestion of a rich European culture lying behind his melancholy. This is one of the early influences which make him go to the university and a professional career in the East. He is exposed to the aesthetic enjoyment of literature. He discovers the relationship between girls like Lena Lingayd and the beauty of great poetry of Virgil (Georgics) and Horace (odes). This brings the countryside of Nebraska in line with the tradition of great poetry. Lena and Antonia are among the 'Hired Girls' in Black Hawk, who come to the town in order to help their parents out of financial difficulties. They are awakened and made observant by coming at a tender age from an old country to a new. They are the daughters of the immigrant, mostly Swedish, farmers and ultimately these imaginative immigrants make the country great. They become prosperous owners of large agricultural fields and the purchasers of the goods sold in towns. Lena Lingayd
succeeds in her business of dress-making. Tiny makes a fortune in mining. Both are Scandinavians and in their own way realize the American dream. One represents the business class and the other the success of the rich miners.

Besides, there are other Europeans in the novel—German neighbours of Jim's grandparents, the Danish laundry girls, the Bohemian Marya, Anna Hausen, Ole Benson, the rascally Krajik, who cheats Shimerdas, Anton Jelinek, the saloon keefer, whose cousin Cuzak marries Antonia, and serves as the hero of "Old Neighbour Rosicky," Selma Kronn, the first Scandinavian girl to get a job in the Black Hawk high school and so on. In contrast to the healthy, beautiful immigrant 'hired girls', the conventional Americans in Black Hawk lack vitality. The girls are anaemic and the boys are too cowardly to enter into matrimony with the 'hired girls'. If only the Old New England stock had mingled with these immigrants girls it would have been rejuvenated. The failure led to an unworthy generation of people like Bayliss Wheeler, Wick Cutter and Sylvester Lovett. They lived only to earn money. Life in towns consisted only of evasions and negations and was petty and protected. Towards the end of the novel Antonia at the centre of her garden serves as a contrast to this disappointed, rootless life. Antonia's stay in Black Hawk only exposed her to betrayal and her salvation lay in being rooted to the American soil. Yet, the memory of her father is always with her and the European past is never left behind. Her marriage to an immigrant Bohemian, Cuzak, who speaks only Czech at home, is
symbolic return to Bohemia. Antonia is fulfilled as a mine of races. Her husband, in spite of occasional homesickness for the theatres and cafes of the old world, is happy in the loneliest corner of the world. While in *Pioneers! America serves as pure raw material and the emphasis is on taming of the land by the operation of the creative will of Europe, in *My Antonia* it is the land where Europe can reach its final flower. In place of the celebration of the untamed vitality of the frontier the vitality and discipline of civilization are combined to form a new synthesis which provides the basis for a settled agricultural society like that eulogized by Horace and Virgil. Willa Cather clearly preferred the civilized countryside which combined the urban-bred or European sensibility with the native American rootedness and strength. In her later books it appeared to be an ideal impossible of achievement. The heroines of Cather’s prairie novels knew what to retain of the past and at the same time how to adopt to the present and the future. That is the true pattern of American achievement.

"Neighbour Rosicky" points out the difference between life in towns, with all its materialism and the countryside. In addition to rootlessness people in cities are treacherous, tempered and hardened and they live by grinding or cheating or poisoning their fellowmen. He tells that "the worst they could do on the farm was better than the best they could be likely to do in the city." During his illness he has a better understanding of Polly, his daughter-in-law, who, in turn, appreciates his capacity for loving others. Ultimately this serves as the unifying force.
In *The Song of the Lark*, the Old world reaches out to Moonstone and makes contact with Thea's hopes and ambitions. This is an aspect of the impact of the Old world on the New. "It is always the touch from the Old world that fulfills the potentialities of American character. The mellowness, the leisureliness, the distrust of mere material progress that the older immigrant brings are always seen by Miss Cather as necessary for a proper fertilization of the American cultural soil."\(^1\) Thea responds to the Old world atmosphere which Prof. Wunach carried with him.

In this novel, the fruition of the American-European theme is symbolized by Mrs. Kohler's garden:

"They were not American basswood, but the European linden, which has honey-coloured blooms in Summer, with a fragrance that surpasses all trees and flowers and drives young people wild with joy."\(^2\)

The emphasis is again on fruition taking place only when the passion, the creativity of a prairie girl is mingled with the best the city of Chicago and Germany have to offer. Wagner's music and Thea's personality combine to make her a great artist. Thea's nurture on Wagner's music is symbolic of America being nourished by European culture.

Although Archie feels out of place and frustrated in Moonstone and wants Thea not to settle down there before giving herself a chance the city-crowd seems to be in conspiracy against the talent of Thea both in her youth and afterwards when she is a successful opera singer.
"The rich noisy city, fat with food and drink, is a
spent thing; its chief concern is its digestion and its
little game of hide-and-seek with the undertaker. Money
and office and success are the consolations of impotence.
Fortune turns kind to such solid people and lets them suck
their bone in peace." 20

But it is in the city that Thea learns music and grows
famous. When caught in the trap of success her freedom is cut and
she has to waste her time and talent over non-essentials.

In One of Ours we have the theme of the impact of the American
West on European sensibility and the claims of the Old world on the
New. The theme is handled differently in this novel which has a less
lyrical tone toward the farming scene and no character finds salvation
in the soil.

Claude is introduced to the world of art and culture by the
Erlichs, a cultured German family in Lincoln. It is one reason why
he feels dissatisfied with his farming activity. He is told by
Ernest Havel, an Austrian, that in the Old world people made themselves
comfortable with little things while the Americans wanted something
outside themselves to make them happy. As his isolation increases,
especially after his marriage, he idealizes the life of art and
European culture of which he had caught a glimpse at the Erlichs'
and he feels involved the moment war breaks out in Europe. He idealizes
the world of German culture but when the Germans threaten Paris, he
identifies Paris with all that is valuable in European culture.
The Germany with its cultural heritage is not lost sight of
and the opposition to Germany is only in regard to the shallow,
cruel patriots who persecuted their fellow citizens of German origin.

When Claude enlists and goes to France as a soldier his
pursuit of the European spirit serves to link the farming section
of the novel with the war section. Lt. David Gerhardt, an American
who had learnt violin in Paris serves as a symbol of a combination
of American ideals and European culture. He introduced Claude to
islands of French civilization in spite of the war and its confusion.

Claude's response to France is Cather's memory of Dorothy
Canfield Fisher in 1902, who was like Lt. Gerhardt, thoroughly at
home in France and fluent in the French. Claude is taken to the
Joubert household. Two sons of the family have already been killed
in the war and the household is being maintained for the eldest son
and two daughters. There is quiet and hospitality in spite of the
war which is destroying France, the symbol of European civilization.
Madame Joubert cares more for what is blooming in the wood than what
the Americans are doing in the war. At Mlle. Claire's he realizes
that war has only scattered things and greed represented by his
brother Baylies Wheeler is capable of causing greater damage. Thus
he gets over his tensions and feels young again.

At the household of Mlle. Olive de Courcy he has a glimpse
of well-ordered French life which pulls him out of his despair.
He feels a bond of sympathy for the family and feels quite at home.
there. While listening to the music of Louis, a servant, he has a vision of a beautiful life and decides to buy a small farm and spend the rest of his life there, after the war ended.

France is considered as having the same kind of agricultural civilization that Nebraska had been. Further, culture and urbanity are found in every farmhouse. The cultural ideal of rural France replaces that of the Divide and it has to be protected against the mechanized Germany which has replaced the older Germany. Willa Cather saw machinery and industry as enemies of man and their greatest embodiment was World War I. As regards the rural-urban polarity in this novel, decay had set in in the country-side because machine's triumph had destroyed man's relation with the soil. That explains why Claude, growing to maturity around 1914, feels out of place at the farm. Heroism was not possible in the countryside anymore. Mechanized Germany was the extreme limit towards which the American countryside was moving. The towns were in the hands of men like Baylis Wheeler who sold machinery and did not produce anything. Their greed could cause greater havoc than the world war.

At the end of the novel the postwar world is seen covered by greed, ugliness, mechanization and commercialization. Claude had gone to Europe to solve an American problem. At the end there is a return to the American soil with Mahalley, the negro maidservant, speaking to Claude's mother, thinking of and speaking for Claude.

Lady Forrester in *A Lost Lady* is considered a Nebraska
version of Madame Bovary and as such serves as a link with the literary tradition of Europe. However, there is one difference. In *A Lost Lady*, there is no good woman to serve as contrast. There is no ethos that could correct or support Lady Forrester. At the same time, while she may be taken as a deceptively charming person, while, inwardly corrupt, who betrays her husband and symbolically betrays the pioneers, she is also a potential artist who has to keep on appearances even while she knows it is all to no purpose. And this is true of all her charm as a hostess, as also of her later behaviour, as a patroness of unworthy social climbers. One view could be that she was lost because of the confusion in her mind of happiness with sex and pleasure.

Neil serves as the Jamesian reflector in the novel. Like Jim in *My Antonia*, he is also exposed to the cultural influences of Europe — Byron, Tom Jones, Wilhelm Meister, Montaigne and Ovid. His wide reading provides him a perspective and enables him to understand his relations with people. He also goes to the east for a professional career. His consciousness is the only hope for the future because his sensibility has sympathetically experienced the end of the pioneering era.

The city Colorado is linked with sin and evil, morally inferior to the countryside. Colorado springs stand for the city while Sweetwater for the countryside. So long as the balance is maintained, the fall of Mrs. Forrester does not take place. Mr Forrester is a man of the soil while the Lady belongs by instinct to town and they make periodic visits to Colorado. It is after the captain's symbolic fall
from the horseback, that the sexual indiscretions of the lady begin.

The failure of the bank in Denver exhausts the vitality of the countryside. The significance of money is emphasized. This is intensified in the Captain's acquaintance of Lady Forrester's compromises with Ivy Peters.

In *The Professor's House*, St Peter's book is about the Europeans' experience in America. The Spanish explorers about whom he wrote had given the name of Sierra Nevada within Spain to the Sierra Nevada of North America. Thus they represented Europe in America. Each range is part of a cordillera, the main mountain axis and backbone of a continent. The book which begins to take shape in the professor's mind has a form, definite and natural as the mountains themselves. It, too, represents the backbone of a continent; it will describe the meaning of the European experience in America. Tom Outland and the professor are linked together by a "sensitivity to history...conceived as a series of past human adventures whose implications reverberate excitingly into the present."

The Professor's holidays in Europe, youthful trips to France and later expeditions to Spain are linked with his journeys in the American Southwest and provide a background of warmth to his speculations about civilization. Thus there is again a fusion of Cather's old preoccupation with the conflicting interests in the American west and in European culture. The difference is that in her earlier novels a character had to escape from one to achieve the other. Here and in *Death comes for the Archbishop* the conflict is resolved
In the Prairie novels Europe was the world of tradition and America the world of innovation, and the hero—the European in America struck the balance. In The Professor's House the roles are reversed. The cliff-dwellers represent the indigenous American tradition and innovation is represented by Europe which stands for infinite aspiration and brave endeavour. The Spanish conquistadores symbolize this characteristic and the professor's work is about them. He gets from Sierra Nevada a quality which is opposite and complementary to that which Tom derives from the cliff palace. Civilization and the spirit of adventure change places and are once again united and the image of their union is once again a naturally aristocratic European in America.

Yet the traditional roles are also there although occupying a lesser status—Europe representing traditions and America innovation. The new Americans are juxtaposed with the aboriginals. Both the continents have their traditionalists and innovators. The Professor knows the culture and the monastery libraries of Spain and Tom knows the cliff city. Each is a mystery to the other; hence their creative friendship. The Professor wants to take him to Paris and revisit old places. Tom brings youthful enthusiasm to the Professor's historical reconstruction and makes him realize that the European conquest was the last great adventure of the human imagination, and thus helps the Professor to put life in the last four volumes of his work. Tom can
combine individuality and communality, innovation and tradition, spontaneity and ritual, and derive values from history missing from his own life and thus live a fuller life. This makes him interesting to the Professor. He is a modern man who, through correct use of the past, is able to achieve wholeness. The Professor in a flash had a vision of the true meaning of what America could be when the idea of the book came to him. The author implies that even those who respect tradition have forgotten the meaning of this ideal. Only the Old world of Europe and Egypt is thought good by them. Americans should value their own past. Modern commercial America has forgotten all traditions, all adventure and thinks only of money, because everything is commercialized. Tom Outland is a leftover from the more hopeful America of the transcendentalists and would have been a misfit, had he not died in war. He could handle only symbols. His creativity would have been stifled by group responsibilities and the getting and spending of money would have deadened his sensibilities. Father Duchene points out that civilization is sacred. The arts of peace are cultivated at the expense of the arts of war and those who are superior in strength defeat and destroy the cultured people. It is implied that the Western European civilization was destroyed in the First World War just as the Indians were destroyed by their neighbours.

In The Professor's House, there is no direct comment upon the rural-urban conflict but there is the juxtaposition of a society, preoccupied with more acquisition of money and the cliff dwellers; who, in their isolation, created something beautiful. The irony is that the forces of evil that destroyed the Indians were not representatives of the
commercial forces which were destroying the rural midwest of Willa Cather. In any case the indictment of the city is there in the condemnation of the mere desire for money for its own sake and not for aesthetic enjoyment. Also there is a description of the sad life of people in the cities like Washington. The crux is that if only people knew how to spend money wisely, the world would be a better place.

In My Mortal Enemy, in spite of all the beauty associated with the aesthetic enjoyment in New York, the key note is the importance of money - the lack of which leads to disaster, as the end of Myra testifies.

There is a description of a West-coast city "in the throes of rapid development - it ran about the shore, stumbling all over itself and finally tumbled untidily into the sea." 22

In Death comes for the Archbishop, the garden of Latour stands for the order conferred upon the wildland - a mingling of European sensibility with the local landscape. The other thing that symbolizes it is the Cathedral at Santa Fe. Equally welcome is the sound of the railway engine, representing the industrial age. Urbanization is acceptable, provided it is in the right direction, in contrast to the madness of the goldrush.

The Prologue of Death comes for the Archbishop at Rome in 1848 presents a contrast between the sophisticated Cardinals at Rome, with their connoisseurship in art and wines, their intellectual finesses,
and their tendency to see American affairs through European spectacles, on the one hand, and the arduous and exacting task of Latour, a French priest, of reviving Catholic faith in New Mexico, recently annexed to the United States. It is prophesied that the Bishop of that See will direct the beginning of momentous things. It is emphasized that the French priests are great organizers and have "a clear sense of proportion and rational adjustment. They are always trying to discover the logical relation of things." 

The cultured European immigrant to America here is concerned with imposing order on chaos. Willa Cather was concerned with order as the essence of civilization at the time that she wrote this novel and, therefore, she attached importance to the French priests as a great civilizing force in America. Latour and his friend Vaillant had to face the silent, reserved Indians, who had their own traditions and a sense of order; the Spanish, Jesuit fathers marked by a passionate intensity, devoted to certain ideals but lacking in order; the violent and emotional Mexicans; and the greedy Anglo-Americans, rapidly spreading at the time the book opens.

Latour is the greatest exemplar of order as the guiding principle of the European civilizing influence. He is polite towards all, reasonable, humane, a believer in dignity and order in human relations. He and his friend Vaillant express nostalgia for France. Latour longs for the company of his own people who shared his desire and dreams. He felt it impossible to transfer his own memories of European civilization into the Indian mind. His friend Father Vaillant
too, hoped to be released one day to return to his religious house in France. There are recollections of the childhood and youth of the two priests in Auvergne. The appreciation of Vaillant's soup as the result of a constantly refined tradition and containing a thousand years' history refers to Cather's appreciation of the French cuisine and way of life in general.

"Stopping to think of it, most things come from France, chefs and salads, gowns and bonnets, dolls and music boxes, plays and players, scientists and inventors, sculptors and painters, novelists and poets. It is a very little country, this France, and yet if it were to take a landslide in the channel some day there would not be much creative power of any sort left in the world. Some psychologist said that all Frenchmen are more or less insane, but fortunately it is an insanity that so often takes the form of genius."

Their gardening is symbolic of their attempts to nurture and bring to fruition the native growths and habits and to transplant the European traditions in America.

Latour experiences a sense of loss at the thought that at the age of forty-seven he would have been surrounded by little children at home. This is overcome by a sense of restoration. He realizes that his solitary life is not a life of atrophy and negation but of perpetual flowering because filled by the grace of Virgin Mother who was all the graces.
Just before his retirement he pays a visit to Auvergne and while there in the old world atmosphere he feels homesick for the new. He feels sad under the weight of too long a tradition. He longs for the light hearted mornings of the desertair and the wind that made him feel young as a boy. The loss of this cannot be made up by the society of learned men, charm of noble women, beautiful surroundings and graces of art. He gives up his plan to spend his retirement in France and occupy a chair in his old college in Clermont. He comes to love Santa Fe where he had built the Cathedral hewn out of the native rock, symbolic of the merging of the native and European cultures, and with which he felt identified. He dies thinking of his youth in France. His great achievement has been to merge the two happily in his consciousness. Thus the nostalgia for France is sublimated into an intense affection for the new country which the two priests Europeanize by making it more Catholic. There is combination of Old and the New world values. The civilization of the catholic southwest provides a symbolic solution and a merging of cultures.

Willa Cather had begun by the influence of the European civilization on the Americans and then passed on to its influence of educated Americans and ended by the showing the influence of America on the educated Europeans.

In her letter to Governor Wilbur Cross Willa Cather wrote that in *Shadows on the Rock*, "the rock of Quebec is not only a stronghold on which many strange figures have for a little time cast a shadow in the sun; it is the curious endurance of a kind of culture, narrow but
definite. There another age persists ...\textsuperscript{25}

She wrote about a French culture transplanted to Canada and preserved as something sacred. It is symbolized by the ordered household of Auclair, the French Apothecary, whose wife's salon was like the one she had left behind in Paris and who had trained her daughter Cecile in order that she might preserve the well-ordered atmosphere after her death. Salad dressing is the symbol of the life of the household like the onion soup in Death comes for the Archbishop, representing a thousand years' culture. As Cather wrote:

"And really, a new society begins with the salad dressing more than with the destruction of Indian villages."\textsuperscript{26}

The Acoma Indians in Death comes for the Archbishop had security on their rock but could not respond to the Europeans' desires and dreams. In Shadows on the Rock Willa Cather brought together the security available on the rock of Quebec and the best of the civilized Frenchmen, symbolizing "European man and his glorious history of desire and dreams."\textsuperscript{27} The Rock is the utmost expression of the human need. Like it the Auclair household is a refuge, a sanctuary for fellow Frenchmen in Quebec. Just before her death Madame Auclair had told her daughter Cecile, to carry on the tradition after her.
The self-exiled Frenchmen in Canada, loyal to Comte de Frontenac are safe from the evils and persecutions in France. Auclair had declined to return to France although the count had offered him an opportunity with a bag of gold coins. After his death he felt alienated recalling the Latin poets' insistence that thrice blessed were they who died in their fatherland.

His household, in the shadow of Chateau, convent and Cathedral sets the tone for the novel. More than in any other novel Willa Cather explores in this novel the transplantation of a culture. As she writes:

"When an adventurer carries his gods with him into a remote and savage country, the colony he founds will, from the beginning, have graces, traditions, riches of the mind and spirit. Its history will shine with bright incidents, slight, perhaps but precious, as in life itself, where the great matters are often as worthless as astronomical distances, and the trifles dear as the heart's blood."28

Cecile does not suffer from nostalgia for France. She belongs to Canada and the French way of life in Canada is the only one she knows and cannot dissociate it from the landscape and the seasons there. She is upset on learning of the possible return to France. Peace returns to the household when she learns that the count has not been recalled to France, as he expected to and therefore her father will remain with his patron in Canada.
Auclair's nostalgia for France ends on listening to the
details of political disturbances in France after the death of Louis XIV
and he feels safe in being isolated from Europe. "He was indeed
fortunate to spend his old age here where nothing changed; to watch
his grandsons grow up in a country where the death of the King, the
probable evils of a long regency, would never touch them." Canada,
thus is a place where nothing changes. That is a limitation of the
New world but that is only from the point of view of an old man for
whom it is only a refuge. Canada is not in any real sense opposed
to France, or to the Old world in general, as a new civilization.
Quebec is France transplanted in a new soil and the new growth naturally
differs from the old. The contact with Europe is maintained. The
Catholic atmosphere is maintained and is perhaps overdone.

The emphasis is on the mingling of the old and the new, symbolized
by Cecile's marriage with Pierre Charron, a Canadian fur trader, a
hunter and an adventurer with knowledge and passion and he serves as
protection to her. Their children are the true Canadians of the future.
Cecile, too, is the product of a French culture deliberately cultivated
in a new environment. In spite of the faint elegiac note for the Old
world the emphasis is on what the new world has to offer. Charron
considers the old world culture as a restriction on his freedom. The
French in Canada are a homogeneous group representing a single culture
while in My Antonia there were various cultural groups in Nebraska.
This shows that in later novels Willa Cather presented comparatively
similar situations - simplified in historical retrospect - involving
a loss - "a lowering of the passion and vitality" in the writer, according to David Deiches. He says that perhaps it is not a loss in literary terms at all. Randall, however, says that here Cather had only the four walls and "left the passion out".

Willard Thorp says that "The vigor of Cather's personality has gone into the making of her novels. The tradition of Western civilization, its art, music, architecture, literature, religious rituals, and national traits, continuously affected her outlook on life, and no modern American writer has made so much of the cultural continuity between the old world and the new." If finished, the novel about Avignon "would have furnished a symbolic climax to her career. In one way or another Europe had entered all her novels. Here at the end, in the Avignon novel, Europe was to have usurped America."