

琉球大学学術リポジトリ

The Scarlet Letter : Hester Prynne and Anne Hutchinson

メタデータ	言語: 出版者: 琉球大学教育学部 公開日: 2007-07-18 キーワード (Ja): キーワード (En): 作成者: Taira, Katsuaki, 平良, 勝明 メールアドレス: 所属:
URL	http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12000/1060

The Scarlet Letter : Hester Prynne and Anne Hutchinson

Katsuaki TAIRA*

(Received Nov, 30, 1987)

The Scarlet Letter is permeated with historical ambience as can be inferred from Hawthorne's statement in the "Custom-House" that "main facts" of the story were "authorized and authenticated by the document of Mr. Surveyor Pue."¹ Indeed, references, direct or indirect, to historical figures and incidents in the seventeenth century New England abound in the story. For example, fictional Governor Bellingham reminds of John Winthrop when Hawthorne says of Bellingham that "though the chances of a popular election had caused this former ruler to descend a step or two from the highest rank, he still held an honorable and influential place among the colonial magistracy." (vii) (When a young man named Vane from England assumed governorship, Winthrop in fact lost his position, although as a founder of the colony he continued to have a significant influence.) And the relation of Wilson to Dimmesdale when the former urges Dimmesdale to expostulate Hester in Chapter iii suggests that of historical Wilson to John Cotton at the Hutchinson trial. There are also possible allusions to Hutchinson herself, Cotton's spiritual disciple. The struggle over whether Hester retains her child or surrenders her to the leading members of the town could be related to the Hutchinson Trial in which Hutchinson was demanded to discard what the authorities considered her heresy under threat of excommunication. Indeed, if we take Pearl as analogous to Hutchinson's "brain child" the parallelism appears more than suggestive. As expected from what could be interpreted as a possible link between Hester and Hutchinson, there are also direct references to Hutchinson herself. One of them, for instance, occurs in Chapter i. Hawthorne, describing the rosebush in front of the prison gate, says, "--or whether, as there is fair authority for believing, it had sprung up under the footsteps of the sainted Ann Hutchinson as she entered the prison-door. . . ." Since Hawthorne persistently maintains the historical framework of the story and it in fact contains many implicit as well as explicit references to Anne Hutchinson, I would like to compare Hester Prynne to Hutchinson, particularly in their relationship to their spiritual mentors.

Hawthorne in his "Biographical Sketches" describes Anne Hutchinson as a woman of austerity.

At the upper end, behind a table, on which are placed the Scriptures and two glimmering lamps, we see a woman, plainly attired, as befits her ripened years; her hair, complexion, and eyes are dark, the latter somewhat dull and heavy, but kindling up with a gradual brightness.²

In fact, she was not only austere but, as is hinted at the end of this extract, intelligent and boldly

*Dept. of English, Coll. of Educ., Univ. of the Ryukyus.

courageous. Winthrop, prejudiced as he was against Hutchinson, depicts her in his writing as “a woman of a haughty and fierce carriage, of a nimble wit and active spirit, and a voluble tongue, more bold than a man. . . .”³ Though Winthrop’s observation was obviously meant to be derogatory, there are many instances that positively reflect her boldness, which ultimately cost Hutchinson her membership of the Church. For example, when at her trial the magistrates attempted to make her confess to heresy, she in return demanded them to swear before their testimonies and forced three of the judges to take oaths after a long debate. Furthermore, when the Church of Boston sent a delegation to her after she had been excommunicated and exiled to Rhode Island, Hutchinson met them and challenged by asking,

from whom thou came, and what was their business; They answered, We are come in the name of the Lord Jesus, from the Church of Christ at Boston, to labour to convince you of etc. — At that word she (being filled with as much disdain in her countenance, as bitterness in her spirit) replied, What, from the Church at Boston? I know no such church, neither will owne it, call it the whore and strumpet of Boston, no church of Christ; so they said no more, seeing her so desperate, but returned.⁴

Hester Prynne bears some physical similarities to Hawthorne’s sketch of Hutchinson.

The young woman was tall, with a figure of perfect elegance, on a large scale. She had dark and abundant hair, so glossy that it threw off the sunshine with a gleam, and a face which besides being beautiful from regularity of feature and richness of complexion, had the impressiveness belonging to a marked brow and deep black eyes. (ii)

Temperamentally as well she resembles Hutchinson for being extremely self-confident and courageously bold. For instance, when the town-beadle tries to place his hand on Hester’s shoulder as she emerges from the prison gate, she “repelled him by an action marked with natural dignity and force of character, and stepped into the open air, as if by her own free-will.” (This behavior is suggestive of Hutchinson’s “haughty carriage” with which she confronted presiding judges at her trial.⁵) Being self-confident, Hester can be more reliable than her spiritual teacher. When Dimmesdale collapses both mentally and physically after being informed of Chillingworth’s identity it is Hester who inspires him with hope in life. Hester is not only strong-willed and in control of herself but also charitably ascetic. For instance, she practices needlework not to adorn herself but to make “garments for the poor” and to earn a little money for her own bare subsistence. Indeed, even in her poorest and most ignominious moments she consistently maintains her humble attitude and charitable spirit, meeting “cruelty with kindness, arrogance with humility.” As Richard Fogle observes, Hester without doubt leads a superior life, morally speaking, to the townspeople.⁶

Just as Hester is sympathetic to the poor and helps them in many ways, Hutchinson was also an active practitioner of well-intentioned works for the people. In Winnifred Rugg’s words she was “Lady Bountiful, helpful in sickness and trouble to all the women she could reach, or whatever degree.”⁷ Though Hutchinson was concerned with the spiritual and material

well-being of the people, she was most devoted to their religious enlightenment. In fact, she exerted a considerable influence upon people even when she was still in England, and on her way to America she became the center of "the little court" by preaching, among other things, her understanding of the relationship of God to man.⁸ After her settlement in New England she began to take an active part in what she considered improving the community. For example, at regularly held private meetings Hutchinson commented on the sermons delivered by various ministers and expounded on the Covenant of Works and Covenant of Grace for the enlightenment of the common people.⁹ Winthrop, with his prejudiced eye, wrote,

Mistris Hutchinsons double weekly-lecture, which she kept under a pretence of repeating sermons, to which resorted sundry of Boston, and other Townes about, to the number of fifty, sixty, or eighty at once; where, after she had repeated the Sermon, she would make her comment upon it, vent her mischivous opinions as she pleased, and wreathed the Scriptures to her owne purpose; where the custom was for her Scholar to propound questions, and she (gravely sitting in the chaire) did make answers thereunto.¹⁰

This, however, simply confirms how influential she became among the populace because of her religious dedication.

Just as Hutchinson rose in popularity, Hester also rises in people's estimation as a consequence of her selfless devotion to the needy. In fact, she finally becomes an almost saintly figure among the average townspeople. They would say, "It is our Hester, — the town's own Hester — who is so kind to the poor, so helpful to the sick, so comfortable to the afflicted!" (xiii) Her good works affect the authorities too. As a consequence, important personages begin requesting her to decorate their robes and gloves: "By degrees, nor very slowly, her handiwork became what would now be termed the fashion." Ultimately, the magistrates start discussing the possibility of removing the scarlet letter from her bosom in order to free her from the visible stigma of her sin. (The favorable change in the magistrates' attitude toward Hester is an interesting divergence from the deepening confrontation between Hutchinson and the authorities.)

There are further resemblances between Hester and Hutchinson. Some of the important similarities are that both of them are extremely attached to their ministers and that there are some sort of interactions between the two sides. As for Hutchinson her spiritual ties to Cotton began in England when she was restless trying to find the right way of living. When she heard Cotton's sermon on the helplessness of man without the infusion of the Spirit in his body, it came as a revelation and everything else she had heard before tumbled down under the weight of his argument. Thenceforth, Cotton became the source of "the intellectual and spiritual food that she craved in her rural home."¹¹ In fact, her enthusiasm for Cotton's teachings was so fervent that she even deduced from her interpretation of them a heretical doctrine of the union of man and the Holy Spirit for justification. On the other hand, Cotton was observing his self-acknowledged disciple's advance in theological understanding with a sort of parental concern, though there was no direct contact between the two. Therefore, when he found out that she was becoming rather unprincipled, Cotton was often eager to restrain her. Hawthorne

refers to Cotton's checking influence on Hutchinson: "In her native country, she had shown symptoms of irregular and daring thought, but, chiefly by the influence of a favorite pastor, was restrained from open indiscretion."¹² Gradually, Hutchinson came to look upon him not merely as the only minister who taught the Covenant of Grace, thus the representative of the right religion, but also as the right religion personified.¹³ When Cotton left England Hutchinson was understandably upset. It was not at all easy for her to find his successor who could satisfy her spiritual needs. Thus a year later Hutchinson followed her mentor to America.

Hester, on the other hand, evinces a different kind of attachment, which is more of devotion than of respect. Just like Hutchinson, Hester arrives in America from England, except that she leaves behind her her old husband, Chillingworth. Soon after her settlement in New England she falls in love with her minister, Dimmesdale. Since she denies any genuine love for her legal husband she is, at least spiritually, almost free of guilt, while Dimmesdale, who enters an illegitimate relationship with her despite his public office, and possibly only on the impulse of the moment, is extremely conscious of his sin. The tragic imbalance in their true sentiment to each other, which exists from the inception of their interdicted relationship, however, does not deter Hester from devoting herself to the minister any the less. On the contrary, her dedication to Dimmesdale is almost heroically altruistic. For instance, despite her difficult situation she consoles the guilt stricken minister when he whimpers in self-pity that he is the worst sinner.

You have deeply and sorely repented. Your sin is left behind you, in the days long past. Your present life is not less holy, in very truth, than it seems in people's eyes. Is there no reality in the penitence thus sealed and witnessed by good works? And wherefore should it not bring you peace? (xvii)

Indeed, her selflessly devoted love raises her morally, far above Dimmesdale, to the extent that their relation becomes almost that of a degenerate sinner to a sympathetic saint. Although she wrongly believes (ironically enough, because Hawthorne admits that good works alone are not the surest sign of regeneracy) that Dimmesdale can be absolved of his sin through his good works, this misunderstanding of hers only demonstrates the intensity of her love that even affects her objective judgment. Indeed, as Mark Van Doren indicates that Hester's devotion to Dimmesdale becomes the only redeeming factor in his life, her selfless love, her submissiveness almost, is pronounced throughout the romance.¹⁴ For example, she begs forgiveness of Dimmesdale for not revealing Chillingworth's identity sooner, even though she conceals it not for her own self-interest but for Dimmesdale's sake.

O Arthur, . . . forgive me! In all things else, I have striven to be true! Truth was the one virtue which I might have held fast, and did hold fast through all extremity; save when thy good, — thy life, — thy fame, — were put in question! (xvii)

However, there is evidence that what appears to be her altruistic submissiveness, as far as her relationship with Dimmesdale is concerned, in fact arises not only from her love for him but also from her belief in some form of reciprocation, be it tangible or intangible, from the

minister even after long years of suffering alone. For instance, when her daughter Pearl is about to be taken away by the authorities, it is to Dimmesdale that she appeals for help.

Thou wast my pastor, and hadst charge of my soul, and knowest me better than those men can. I will not lose the child! Speak for me! Thou knowest, — for thou hast sympathies which those men lack! — Thou knowest what is in my heart, and what are a mother's rights, and how much the stronger they are, when that mother has but her child and the scarlet letter! (viii)

In this emotional and equivocal entreaty, Hester reveals her conviction in Dimmesdale's sympathetic sentiments for her, which, she presumes, lie frustrated since after the moment of their passionate consummation. One of the most explicit scenes in which the ember of her love flares up in anticipation of Dimmesdale's response to her love occurs in Chapter xviii when he agrees to escape with Hester from the community in which they are confined.

Her sex, her youth, and the whole richness of her beauty came back from what men call the irrevocable past, and clustered themselves, with her maiden hope, and a happiness before unknown, within the magic circle of this hour.

This excerpt corroborates that her attachment to the minister is not necessarily based on her altruistic love for him but rather largely on her hope for his reciprocation.

Another important feature in Hester-Dimmesdale and Hutchinson-Cotton relationships is that neither woman would implicate her minister in her accused sin despite mounting pressures. As for Hutchinson, she became more and more active by swaying the common people's opinions and accusing ministers other than Cotton of false teachings. Since she attacked influential community personages while extolling her mentor, the authorities began to be both alarmed and annoyed by what they considered her seditious discrimination. In addition, they were beginning to be displeased with Cotton, who appeared to be condoning aberrant behaviors of Hutchinson. It came to the point where they could no longer overlook the undesirable situation she was creating. Because her spiritual ties to Cotton were so obvious to them, this was a particularly trying time for Hutchinson. However, out of her consideration for his position as a public official, she never publicly identified her doctrines, which the authorities gradually came to regard heretical, with his no matter what happened, though at her weekly private meetings she readily admitted her indebtedness to Cotton. Her stance on this issue was adamant.

Likewise, Hester would not reveal the name of Pearl's father under any circumstances. Even when Dimmesdale entreats her to divulge the name in front of the magistrates with his ambiguous emotionalism she remains resolute. Indeed, there are numerous agents that torture Hester to confess to her co-sinner. The scarlet letter on her bosom is one. Hawthorne says that it "was not mere scarlet cloth, tinged in an earthly dye-pot, but was red-hot with infernal fire, and could be seen glowing all alight, whenever Hester Prynne walked abroad in the night-time." (v) (The significance of the letter is evident when she hides it with Pearl as soon as she emerges

from the prison gate in the beginning of the story.) Ironically, her daughter is another agent which accuses Hester of her sin. For instance, Pearl unknowingly persecutes her mother with her “little, laughing image of a fiend peeping out.” In fact, her innocent remarks are most of the time equivocal. When Pearl tells that Hester is hated by the sun, for instance, it could mean that Hester is hated by the Son. If the sun can be at least partially identified with the Son, Pearl’s further remark sounds more than caustic: “the sunshine does not love you. It runs away and hides itself, because it is afraid of something on your bosom.” (xvi) At one stage, Hawthorne even identifies Pearl with the scarlet letter itself except that she is “in another form: the scarlet letter endowed with life.” In other words, Pearl becomes an extension of the curse of the letter, only more menacing, being “endowed with life,” and therefore she is almost a reincarnation of the letter born to torture Hester into confession. However, despite all these formidable adversaries to torment Hester into confession she does successfully resist them and keep the minister’s secret within herself.

On the other hand, both Hester’s and Hutchinson’s teachers, who are the objects of their devotion and reverence, do not reciprocate their loyalty. Rather, the two men are more concerned with the system of which they are a part, — with a reason. Dimmesdale, for one, enjoys high respect of the people because his eloquence and religious fervor have secured him a position as one of the most important spiritual leaders in the parish. He also has a considerable influence among his colleagues. Asked by Hester to dissuade the elders from taking Pearl away from her, he successfully exercises a theological argument reminiscent of Cotton’s casuistry.

It [Pearl] was meant for a blessing; for the one blessing of her life! It was meant, doubtless, as the mother herself hath told us, for a retribution too; a torture, to be felt at many an unthought of moment, a pang, a sting, an ever-récurring agony, in the midst of a troubled joy! (viii)

Similarly, Cotton was quite established in his time and wielded a powerful influence among his ministerial colleagues. For instance, even though the elders suspected his heretical connection with Hutchinson, they could not publicly accuse him because, among other things, “he commanded the respect of the Bay’s influential backers in England” and he “could summon the theological support of the great English Puritans.”¹⁵ After all, it was a recognized fact that he was one of the staunchest supporters of theocracy, for which the New England Puritans were striving to attain an ideal society.

Democracy, I do not conceyve that even God did ordyne as a fitt government eyther for church or commonwealth. . . . As for monarchy, and aristocracy, they are both of them clearly approved, and directed in scripture, yet so as referreth the soveraigntie to himself, and setteth up Theocracy in both, as the best forme of government in the commonwealth, as well as in the church.¹⁶

It was almost sacrilegious to criticize such a man directly.

Although the Hester-Dimmesdale and Hutchinson-Cotton relations are not reciprocal, the relation between both Dimmesdale and Cotton, on the one hand, and both people and authorities, on the other hand, is in a restrictive sense. In other words, while both Cotton and Dimmesdale exert influence on them, they in turn restrict the two spiritual teachers in various ways. As for Dimmesdale, Hawthorne says, he is indeed "at the head of the social system" but, at the same time, he is "trammelled by its regulations, its principles, and even its prejudices." For example, when Hester commits the sin it is with the preacher whom the townspeople sympathize. Reflecting the sentiment of the whole town, one of them says, "She hath raised a great scandal, I promise you, in godly Master Dimmesdale's Church." However, the townspeople's and his colleagues' high regard for him in turn causes a psychological pressure on Dimmesdale in the form of their expectations from him. As Charles O'Donnell points out, Dimmesdale cannot escape from the society which accepts him as he is defined by his function as a preacher.¹⁷ Ironically enough, one of the townspeople's diagnoses of his emaciation is

his too earnest devotion to study, his scrupulous fulfilment of parochial duty, and, more than all, by the fasts and vigils of which he made a frequent practice, in order to keep the grossness of this earthly state from clogging and obscuring his spiritual lamp. (ix)

Some even remark that "if he is going to die the world is not worthy to be any longer trodden by his feet."

His reputation does not leave Dimmesdale unaffected. Firstly, the world's failure to recognize what he really is ultimately causes the destruction of his "moral tissues."¹⁸ Rationalizing his own hypocrisy, Dimmesdale conjectures that without any stigma attached to himself he could render greater service to the people. In fact, the more he suffers, keeping the secret to himself, the better his sermons become.

. . . so far as his duties would permit, he trode in the shadowy by-paths, and thus kept himself simple and childlike; coming forth when occasion was, with a freshness, and fragrance, and dewy purity of thought, which as many people said, affected them like the speech of an angel. (iii)

But his attempt at self-deception inevitably proves futile. However highly he may be regarded by people and however moving his sermons may be, Dimmesdale is aware that he is simply deluding himself to moral isolation.¹⁹

The minister well knew — subtle, but remorseful hypocrite that he was! — the light in which his vague confession would be viewed. He had striven to put a cheat upon himself by making the avowal of a guilty conscience, but had gained only one other sin, and a self-acknowledged shame, without the momentary relief of being self-deceived. He had spoken the very truth, and transformed it into the veriest falsehood. (xi)

Secondly, whenever Dimmesdale struggles to be freed of his hypocrisy by revealing the truth,

his fame, which he has built with his false facade, invariably forces his ego on the defensive. One day he goes out for a midnight vigil in order to repent on the same scaffold where Hester, surrounded by a crowd of people, stood in shame seven years ago. However, once he arrives at the scene, he is so overwhelmed with shame that he is relieved to find the place deserted. In desperation he fantasized death as a quick end to his misery, again only to be frustrated in his attempt. To the end he can neither confess to his sin nor compensate for his hypocrisy, for his pride and ambition after all would not allow him to betray the expectations of the society, which feeds with respect and praise his "ego fundamentally intent on itself."²⁰

Cotton experienced a similar reciprocal pressure from society. As Cotton's popularity as a brilliant minister increased partly due to Hutchinson, who essentially concurred with his Covenant of Grace, laymen in the congregation began to stress the differences between him and the other ministers and openly discriminate against Wilson, another pastor of the church, in favor of Cotton: "At Cotton's sermons the congregation took notes; at Wilson's there were frowns, dozings, and even abrupt departures."²¹ When Hutchinson, now a leader of the popular movement, started accusing every minister except Cotton and Wheelwright, her brother-in-law, of being under a Covenant of Works, Cotton was trapped in an awkward position. On the one hand, he was flattered by her appreciation of his teachings, but on the other hand, he was alarmed by the imminent prospect of antagonizing his colleagues. In his effort to remedy the situation, he concentrated on mitigating the conflict between the Covenant of Grace and Covenant of Works that was a primal cause of his alienation. On one occasion, addressing the passengers leaving for England, Cotton "willed them to tell our countrymen, that all the strife amongst us was about magnifying the grace of God within us, and the other to advance the grace of God toward us."²² In the meantime, however, pressure upon Cotton to rectify his position was mounting from the authorities. Taking seriously what he and others regarded as Cotton's aberrations, Wilson expressed his concern that "if these differences and alienations among brethren were not speedily remedied," the church would suffer the "inevitable danger of separation."²³ Even Winthrop, fearing a schism within the Church, had to interfere in order to moor Cotton to the authorities: Winthrop "wrote to Cotton about it, and laid before him diverse failings, (as he proposed,) and some reasons to justify Mr. Willson, and dealt plainly with him [Cotton] ."²⁴

On the other hand, Dimmesdale's spiritual sufferings exacerbate with the passage of time. He has to confess his sin in order to clear his conscience, but he is overwhelmed by the consequences, for confession has become almost "a kind of betrayal of society's heart for the sake of his own."²⁵ While the shame and fear of betraying the societal expectations has magnified so large in his mind that he hesitates to acknowledge his guilt, other matters complicate his dilemma. He has to stand on the scaffold with Pearl and Hester to win the child's affection and has to do penance in public to escape from Chillingworth's curse. Because of the complex nature of his quandary, especially considering the sacrifice involved for its solution, in time he begins to manifest outward signs of the torment, becoming "more careworn and emaciated, . . . his large dark eyes had a world of pain in their troubled and melancholy depth." Under the stress, furthermore, Dimmesdale gradually reveals his character weaknesses. In his agony he transfers a part of his own guilt to Chillingworth, accusing him of being

the worst sinner and making him a scapegoat rather than fully admitting his own culpability. Even in the final scaffold scene he evinces lack of courage by falling short of making a full confession, for he does not verbally acknowledge himself as Pearl's father. Since, as Donald Crowley notes, the readers, who are after all the interpretive consciousness to invest the romance with meanings, have no recourse to "obvious, external reference" without a verbal confirmation, it can be said that to the end Dimmesdale fails to voluntarily solve the dilemma when he leaves the readers to rely on the conflicting testimonies provided by the public, who are not sure of Dimmesdale's guilt themselves.²⁶

Although Dimmesdale's character weaknesses so far can be only implicitly related to his egoism, there are more explicit cases of his self-centeredness, which ultimately causes his desertion of Hester. For instance, despite the fact that Hester hides Chillingworth's identity for his sake, Dimmesdale answers her self-immolating request for forgiveness with a savage frown. His remark is almost blasphemous.

O Hester Prynne, thou little, little knowest all the horror of this thing! And the shame! — the indelicacy! — the horrible ugliness of this exposure of a sick and guilty heart to the very eye that would gloat over it! Woman, woman, thou art accountable for this! I cannot forgive thee! (xvii)

Furthermore, when Hester suggests that they leave the community together, he is reluctant to consider the offer until he understands that he can finish his Election Sermon before their departure. Such as he is, it comes as no surprise that in the final procession scene he totally withdraws into his own selfish world, basking in his own self-glorification.

She hardly knew him now! He moving proudly past, enveloped, as it were, in the rich music, with the procession of majestic and venerable fathers; he, so unattainable in his worldly position and still more so in that far vista of his unsympathizing thoughts, through which she now beheld him!

This egoistic self-absorption not only reveals his essential indifference toward Hester which has persisted beneath the surface from the beginning of their relationship, but also signifies his final desertion of her, at least on the spiritual level.

As for Cotton, he too ultimately forsakes his devoted follower for his self-interest. Under the circumstances difficult for himself, Cotton initially tried to save Hutchinson from the accusations of heresy. In order to remove the elders' suspicion of her unorthodoxy, for instance, he clarified the terminologies on both sides of the Covenants and tried to smooth over difficulties by making new interpretations of what was said between them "so that when he finished there seemed to be little distinction between both sides."²⁷ However, the magistrates had set their mind on her excommunication. When, in addition to the charge of heresy, they brought against her that of sedition for regularly holding large group meetings of common people, therefore, Cotton could no longer afford to be associated with Hutchinson without jeopardizing his own status. The only alternative left for him was to abandon her. Cotton

thereupon “pronounced the sentence of admonition with great solemnity, and with much zeal and detestation of her errors and pride of spirit.”²⁸ In the “Way Cleared” he publicly declared that

I would not have enlarged my self so much, either to clear her [Hutchinson’s] testimony, or to elevate it, were it not to take off some scruples and surmises in Mr. Bylie of some dangerous guilt in me of Antinomian, and Familisticall errors, which he thinks cannot be avoided by what he collecteth from other testimonies, as well as hers which may fully be prevented and avoided by this revelation of the true state of things.²⁹

Though Cotton used to be flattered by her discipleship, now that the circumstances had changed, he became desperate to minimize his former affinity with Hutchinson. He writes that Hutchinson was his “deare friend, till shee turned aside,” but even “in the times of her best acceptance, she was not so dear unto mee. . . .”³⁰ He vituperates her further.

She turned aside not only to corrupt opinions, but to dis-esteem generally the Elders of the Churches, . . . and for my selfe, (in the repetitions of sermons in her house) what shee .repeated and confirmed, was accounted found, what she omitted was accounted Apocrypha.³¹

After her excommunication Cotton’s attack turns to vengeance. When a rumor spread that Hutchinson had given birth to a monstrous baby, Cotton immediately seized upon the opportunity to deliver a sermon, in which he related the incident to her heresy.

Comparisons between the Hester-Dimmesdale and Hutchinson-Cotton relationships reveal interesting similarities as well as dissimilarities. First of all, both Hester and Hutchinson trust their spiritual teachers but both women are betrayed in the end. Secondly, both Dimmesdale and Cotton exert great influence on their society but it in turn implicitly demands their conformity to its expectations. Thirdly, both men have private concerns that conflict with the expectations of the system which they are in, but they are forced to act in a way contrary to their will. For Cotton the dilemma is between his social standing and his personal theological affinity with Hutchinson. For Dimmesdale, on the other hand, it is between his reputation as a preacher and his sense of guilt. Ironically, Hester does not enter his spiritual conflict but only as an accuser of his conscience. After all, from the beginning Dimmesdale’s sin is not caused by his love for Hester but by an impulsive moment of passion. As for Cotton, although initially he tries to help his tacitly acknowledged disciple, ultimately he cannot sacrifice his status. In the final analysis, both historical Cotton and Hawthorne’s fictional character, Dimmesdale, act on their selfish motives and as a result both Hutchinson and Hester are forsaken.

NOTES

¹ Throughout the paper I used *The Scarlet Letter and Other Tales of the Puritans*, edited by Harry Levin, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961.

² Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Biographical Sketches: Mrs. Hutchinson," in *Miscellanies: Biographical and Other Sketches and Letters* (Boston, 1900), p. 5.

³ John Winthrop, "A Short Story," in *Antinomianism in the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, 1636-1638*, edited by Charles Francis Adams (Boston, 1894), p. 158.

⁴ Winthrop, p. 89.

⁵ I partly owe this comparison to Winnifred King Rugg, *Unafraid: A Life of Anne Hutchinson* (New York, 1970), p. 85.

⁶ Hester's moral superiority is pointed out by Richard Harter Fogle in his *Hawthorne's Fiction: The Light and the Dark* (Oklahoma, 1952), p. 117.

⁷ Rugg, p. 83.

⁸ This biographical information is from Rugg, pp. 61-62.

⁹ According to the Covenant of Grace, the person of the Holy Ghost dwells in a justified person and its extreme version is the personal union with the Holy Ghost. According to the Covenant of Works, on the other hand, sanctification--holy acts--can help evidence justification. For further details on the Antinomian controversy, consult Perry Miller, ed., *The Puritans: A Sourcebook of Their Writings* (New York, 1963), pp. 14-15, 156-157, et passim.

¹⁰ Adams, p. 79.

¹¹ Rugg, p. 39.

¹² Hawthorne, *Miscellanies*, pp. 3-4.

¹³ As for Hutchinson's identification of Cotton with the right religion, see Rugg, P. 50.

¹⁴ On Hutchinson's devotion to Dimmesdale see Mark Van Doren, "The Scarlet Letter," in *Hawthorne: A Collection of Critical Essays*, edited by A.N. Kaul (Englewood Cliff, New Jersey, 1966), p. 133.

¹⁵ Larzer Ziff, *The Career of John Cotton: Puritanism and the American Experience* (Princeton, 1962), p. 122.

¹⁶ "Copy of a Letter from Mr. Cotton to Lord Say and Seal in the Year 1636," in Thomas Hutchinson's *The history of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts-Bay*, vol. 1, edited by Lawrence Shaw Mayo (Cambridge, 1936), p. 415.

¹⁷ Charles R. O'Donnell, "Hawthorne and Dimmesdale: The Search for the Realm of Quiet," *Nineteenth Century Fiction*, XIV (March, 1960), p. 324.

¹⁸ The term is from Lawrence Sargent Hall, *Hawthorne: Critic of Society* (New Haven, 1944), p. 168.

¹⁹ On Dimmesdale's moral isolation see Arlin Turner, *Nathaniel Hawthorne: An Introduction and Interpretation* (New York, 1961), p. 59.

²⁰ On Dimmesdale's egoism see Terence Martin, *Nathaniel Hawthorne* (Boston, 1965), p. 115.

²¹ Ziff, p. 114.

²² Cotton is here trying to minimize the differences between justification and sanctifica-

tion, respectively. John Winthrop, *The History of New England from 1630 to 1649*, vol. 1, edited by James Savage (Boston, 1825), p. 213.

²³ Winthrop, p. 209.

²⁴ Winthrop, p. 211.

²⁵ O'Donnell, p. 320.

²⁶ On the significance of the verbal identification of the referent see Donald J. Crowley, *Nathaniel Hawthorne* (London, 1971), pp. 88–89.

²⁷ Rugg, p. 174.

²⁸ Winthrop, p. 256.

²⁹ Adams, p. 356.

³⁰ Adams, p. 358.

³¹ Adams, p. 358.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adams, Charles Francis, ed. *Antinomianism in the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, 1636–1638*. Boston: The Prince Society, 1894.
- Crowley, Donald J. *Nathaniel Hawthorne*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971.
- Fogle, Richard Harter. *Hawthorne's Fiction: The Light and the Dark*. Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1952.
- Hall, Lawrence Sargent. *Hawthorne: Critic of Society*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944.
- Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *Miscellanies: Biographical and Other Sketches and Letters*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1900.
- Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The Scarlet and Other Tales of the Puritans*. Harry Levin, ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961.
- Hutchinson, Thomas. *The History of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts-Bay*. 3 vols. Lawrence Shaw Mayo, ed. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936.
- Kaul, A.N., ed. *Hawthorne: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Englewood Cliff, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1966.
- Martin, Terence. *Nathaniel Hawthorne*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1965.
- Miller, Perry and Thomas H. Johnson, eds. *The Puritans: A Sourcebook of Their Writings*. New York: Harper & Row, 1963.
- O'Donnell, Charles R. "Hawthorne and Dimmesdale: The Search for the Realm of Quiet," *Nineteenth Century Fiction*, XIV (March, 1960), pp. 317–332.
- Rugg, Winnifred King. *Unafraid: A Life of Anne Hutchinson*. New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1970.
- Turner, Arlin. *Nathaniel Hawthorne: An Introduction and Interpretation*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1961.
- Winthrop, John. *The History of New England from 1630 to 1649*. 2 vols. James Savage, ed. Boston: Phelps and Farnham, 1825.
- Ziff, Larzer. *The Career of John Cotton: Puritanism and the American Experience*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962.

Scarlet Letter では 17 世紀のアメリカの人物、事象への言及が数多くなされているが、この小説の中心人物 Hester Prynne とその愛人 Arthur Dimmesdale も歴史的人物とかなり共通した部分が有り、特に Hester Prynne と Arthur Dimmesdale の関係は Anne Hutchinson と John Cotton の関係に酷似している。事実、Hester Prynne と Anne Hutchinson はこの本で何度か比較されている。勿論 Hester Prynne-Arthur Dimmesdale と Anne Hutchinson-John Cotton の関係を完全に一致するものと断定することは些か危険であるが、この小説を研究する一つの手段として—あくまでも可能性として—私は上の関係を比較してみた。

Hester Prynne と Anne Hutchinson は両者とも強い意志を持った自主的な女性であるがまたその一方、世の中の為に尽くしていこうという奉仕の精神にも溢れている。例えば Hester Prynne は貧しく恵まれない人の良き理解者となるし、Anne Hutchinson は一般市民の宗教的啓蒙に努力を惜しまない。両者の指導者的立場にあるのが Arthur Dimmesdale と John Cotton である。John Cotton は Anne Hutchinson にとって尊敬すべき真の精神的指導者であるが、Arthur Dimmesdale は Hester Prynne にとって真に指導者的立場にありながら、実は人間的

に弱点を持った悩める偽善者なのである。この二組の関係は彼らと彼らを取り巻く社会との相互作用により展開していく。John Cotton にとって Anne Hutchinson は黙認された、しかし歓迎すべき信者であるが、Anne Hutchinson が異端的教義を唱え出すやいなや John Cotton の立場は急に苦しくなっていく。つまり、Anne Hutchinson に賞賛されることは喜ばしいことなのであるがそのことは他の教会の指導者との対決を否応なしに招く結果になるのである。一方、過去の罪を隠して精神的に苦しみながらの Arthur Dimmesdale の教会での説教は真実を知らない人々には天使の声に聞こえるほど崇高なものに思われ彼の名声は益々高まっていくばかりであるが、心中には常に葛藤が有り彼は罪人としての真の自分をさらけ出す必要に迫られる。結局は John Cotton が社会の圧力に屈して Anne Hutchinson を見捨てるのと同様に Arthur Dimmesdale も最後には自分の社会的名声を損なうことなく公での懺悔を曖昧なものにしたまま Hester Prynne の手の届かぬところに逃れる。皮肉なことに Arthur Dimmesdale の葛藤において、Hester Prynne は彼の良心を咎める要因にしか過ぎず、彼女の一方的な献身的愛情は期待も空しく報われることなく終わるのである。