The Blithedale Romance and the Lore of the "Haunting Margaret-Ghost"
（『ブライズデイル・ロマンス』と「彷徨うマーガレットの亡霊」伝承）

Shitsuyo Masui*

SUMMARY IN JAPANESE:『ブライズデイル・ロマンス』は超絶主義共同体ブルックファーム建設を素材とした 19 世紀都市小説である。ホーソーンは本作品を「ロマンス」とし、虚構性を強調する。しかし、作者の実体験に基づく本作にはボストン郊外における共同体建設実験、ブルジョア層の台頭、アイルランド移民と貧困等、都市の構造変化や格差問題が写実的に描かれている。写実性は人物描写にも現れ、ヒロインの一人ゼノビアはマーガレット・フラーと重なる。本稿では、ヘンリー・ジェイムズによる W. W. ストーリイ伝、カービィによるブルックファーム参加記録等の同時代資料を参照し、作品の写実性に注目する。執筆年 1851 ～ 52 年は、水死したフラーのメモワールがエマソン、W. H. チャニング、クラークにより編集出版された年と重なる。特に、チャニングによるフラー文書改竄は近年の研究者により問題視されている。こうした歴史背景と作品との関係が分析の軸となる。ゼノビアの女権思想はフラーのリベラル・フェミニズムが、ストウ姉妹等の福音主義的ドメスティック・フェミニズムと一線を画した思想であったことを示す。ゼノビアが語る入れ子物語の中心、メドゥーサのイメージに着目し、本作がロマンスの型を取る写実的小説であることを指摘する。ウェスト・ロクスベリーのユートピア共同体実験、ムーディが徘徊するサウス・ボストン移民居住区の悲惨、市街地のブルジョア富裕層の活気ある描写は本作の写実性を示す。しかしながらカヴァデールの語りは史実をロマンスのヴェールで覆う。

* 増井　志津代　Professor, Department of English Literature, Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan.

This paper discusses *The Blithedale Romance* in relation to woman's culture in nineteenth-century Boston. Societal changes were brought by transatlantic migration, capitalist economic development, and changes in the roles of men and women and in family structure. Hawthorne sets the novel both in the utopian community of Brook Farm in West Roxbury, a suburb in Greater Boston, and in Boston's city center where consumption-oriented capitalism as well as increasing numbers of transatlantic immigrants were transforming the historic cityscape from the colonial Puritan past. Hawthorne's novel depicts mid-nineteenth century Boston in the form of romance but each scene is filled with realistic descriptions and representations of urban life in the North American metropolis. Drawing on the documents concerning Brook Farm that have become available to us, this paper examines the historical background of the novel and its relation to the setting and characters. I take Coverdale, the narrator of the novel, and Zenobia as the two leading characters. Both live in the city center as well as in the utopian community in the suburb. They sometimes collaborate but often compete with each other in their artistic endeavors as storytellers and as interpreters of the events that happen in the novel.

Zenobia, as a feminist in the novel, has been compared with Margaret Fuller since the appearance of this work on the market in 1852. The authorial time frame between 1851 and 1852, when Hawthorne was working on *The Blithedale Romance*, coincided with the period when Ralph Waldo Emerson, William Henry Channing, and James Freeman Clarke were working together to prepare the publication of *Memoirs of Margaret Fuller Ossoli*. The two-volume *Memoirs* was published in 1852, in the same year Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance* appeared. Having lost Fuller, a prominent Transcendental club member, on May 17, 1850, in the tragic shipwreck near Fire Island, New York, Emerson, Clarke, and Channing came together to compile her memoirs to commemorate her life. To protect her "reputation" in the motherland, according to a recent study, the three men carefully destroyed enormous amounts of her original manuscripts that contained passages not up to their standards.[1] I observe a metaphorical correlation between the treatment of the corpus of Fuller papers and the discovery and restoration of Zenobia's corpus (corpse) found in the river at the end of the novel.

Henry James takes up Margaret Fuller as one of the most influential Americans to cross the Atlantic Ocean in the first half of the nineteenth

century. In 1903, roughly five decades after the appearance of Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance*, James published *William Wetmore Story and His Friends*, a biography of a Bostonian sculptor who lived in Italy, upon a request from the Story family. In this work, James writes about "the American pilgrims" who "crossed the Atlantic to follow one or the other of those mysteries, arts, sciences. . . ."[2] James includes Fuller among the expatriate Americans and introduces her as "the talker, the moral *improvisatrice*, or at least [she] had been in her Boston days, when, young herself, she had been as a sparkling fountain to other thirsty young."[3] James further states: "Mme. Ossoli's circle represented, after all, a small stage, and . . . there were those on its edges to whom she was not pleasing. This was the case with Lowell and, discoverably, with Hawthorne." Then, he continues, "the legend of [Hawthorne] having had her in his eye for the figure of Zenobia, while writing 'The Blithedale Romance,' surely never held water."[4] James' devaluation of Fuller seemed to be connected with his assumption that "she left nothing behind her, her written utterance being naught."[5] He severely cuts Fuller off from the list of serious American Transcendentalist thinkers. James, however, self-interrogates and immediately repudiates his hasty assessment saying "but to what would she have corresponded, have 'rhymed,' under categories actually known to us?" Even half a century after her tragic death, Margaret Fuller remained a mystery, for her writings were not much available since so many of them were distorted or scattered.[6]

Thanks to the recent scholarship on Fuller, we now see the reason why most of Fuller's writings were unavailable to James. According to Bell Gale Chevigny, it was to protect Fuller's reputation that her family "censored what was entrusted to the editors of the two-volume *Memoirs of Margaret Fuller Ossoli* (1852), a work which blended her informal writings with the recollections of her friends"[7] immediately after her death. Chevigny asserts that the editors, James Freeman Clarke, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and W. H. Channing, "perhaps bury her" during the editorial process. To protect Fuller's reputation, "they freely applied pen and even scissors in preparing them for the printers." Consequently, "whole letters and journal entries were 'copied' and in most cases the original manuscripts destroyed."[8] Chevigny's study, which has been followed by recent critical reevaluations of Fuller's works, enable us to attempt to read Hawthorne's novel in this mid-nineteenth century cultural and historical context when Fuller and the Transcendentalists

were putting their original ideals into practice in art, literature, social reform, and urban community formation. In his novel, Hawthorne extracted the essential elements of the mid-nineteenth century Transcendentalist movement both as a participant and an observer of their utopian enterprise. Partially reflecting his own perspective in the narrative voice, Hawthorne's novel takes us into the historical moments when the Transcendentalist experiments were flourishing in Boston and its vicinity. This analysis especially focuses upon woman's culture in nineteenth-century Boston.

1. Orthodox Calvinism and Unitarian Liberalism

Focusing his historical analysis on the cultural situation in 1851 and 1852, the authorial time frame, Richard Brodhead connects the Veiled Lady in Hawthorne's text with the emergence of women in American popular entertainment. He argues that the female dancers, singers, and novelists who became visible in the public sphere culminated in the figure of the Veiled Lady who "leads a life of pure exhibitionism."[9] Brodhead also connects her with spiritual types of a woman molded in the Cult of True Womanhood similar to such cultural types as Augustine St. Clair's mother or Little Eva in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* also published in 1852. *The Blithedale Romance*, however, presents a totally different type of female figure, who uses her "public name" of Zenobia as "a sort of mask in which she comes before the world" (8).[10] Instead of leading "a life of pure exhibitionism" or exhibiting the "personification of woman domestically defined," Zenobia presides in Blithedale like a "queen" or a matriarch. Zenobia is not only a character observed in Coverdale's storytelling but also contributes her own tale "The Silvery Veil" as a narrator. In Zenobia's story, the Veiled Lady is not a weakly maiden but creates herself as a person who transfigures herself into a chimerical Medusa-figure and threatens her suitor away with fear and anxiety.

Since Jane Tompkins published her influential work *Sensational Designs* in 1985, literary as well as cultural critics have shown how the sentimental rhetoric often employed by revivalist preachers gave women writers in the Evangelical vein, such as Harriet Beecher Stowe, Susan Warner and other popular fiction writers, opportunities to lead the market for sentimental

novels. Mid-nineteenth century Boston, however, was a culturally distinctive city having Unitarian liberals as the most influential religious and cultural group. As Lawrence Buell analyzes in his *New England Literary Culture*, nineteenth-century New England was ideologically divided into Boston-Harvard centered Unitarian liberals and Connecticut-Yale centered Orthodox Calvinist Evangelicals.[11] The Beecher family represents the latter. The New Haven theologians had inherited Jonathan Edwards' Great Awakening and the revivalist legacy in Northampton and the Pioneer Valley area. On the other hand, most of the Boston intellectuals and writers belonged to the liberal Unitarian circle. Although Ralph Waldo Emerson criticized Unitarianism from within, he eventually became the major spokesperson for the Unitarians, who became much closer to Transcendentalists accepting Emerson's ideas.

Unitarian-Transcendentalist female intellectuals created a much more radical woman's culture in comparison with the Evangelical writers represented by Harriet Beecher Stowe, Catherine Beecher, and Elizabeth Phelps Ward.[12] These liberal Unitarian reformists were not only exercising their influence in the domestic sphere but challenging a prevailing ideological construction including the sphere ideology itself.[13] Unitarian-Transcendentalist women attempted to change urban cultural settings in Boston where the hierarchical leadership of male ministers had enjoyed hegemony since the colonial Puritan period. Fuller and Elizabeth Peabody were leading women whose experiments in urban reformation were close to modernizing efforts of mid-nineteenth century European cities such as Paris and Florence.[14] Reflecting the life of Margaret Fuller, the utmost intellectual woman in the Unitarian-Transcendentalist circle, *The Blithedale Romance* presents heroic lives of women who fought to shape mid-nineteenth century culture, stepping beyond the sphere allocated for women.

2. Woman's Culture and Boston

In *The Blithedale Romance*, Zenobia represents a woman's culture in mid-nineteenth century Boston, which Hawthorne had observed closely through Margaret Fuller, Elizabeth Peabody, and his wife Sophia Hawthorne. These women formed a tight network at the literary salon in Elizabeth Peabody's bookstore, at the utopian community in Brook Farm in West

Roxbury, and at Fuller's series of Conversations. Although Coverdale functions as the official narrator in *The Blithedale Romance*, he often "covers-the-tale" as his name suggests. When we focus on Zenobia as the "prime site" of the Blithedale community and as a thinker-artist who provides her original insights, we find another narrative that complements Coverdale's official story.

Hawthorne's romance was not exempt from what Henry James calls "the unquestionably haunting Margaret-ghost." [15] An anonymous writer in the *Westminster Review*, in October 1852, states:

> Imaginary as the characters are, however, the supposition that Zenobia is an apograph of Margaret Fuller, may not be so far wrong. The extraordinary woman could not have been absent from the mind of the novelist—nay, must have inspired his pencil, whilst sketching "the high-spirited woman bruising herself against the narrow limitations of her sex."[16]

From the first publication of *The Blithedale Romance*, the reading public could not resist seeing Zenobia's death by drowning as an allusion to Fuller's death. Resisting such a popular association, Orestes Brownson, one of Fuller's fellow Transcendentalists and an influential friend of George Ripley, says in his review that Hawthorne "brings none of the real actors [of Brook Farm] in the comedy, or farce, or tragedy, whichever it may have been upon the stage." [17] One reviewer, on the other hand, calls Zenobia "a sort of Yankee George Sand." Fuller, too, was often compared to this French author. Referring to "the proud, passionate, ill-regulated queenly Zenobia," the reviewer says: "One lesson impressed by the book is the danger of a woman, no matter what her gifts, deviating ever so little from the received usages of society." [18] The horrific picture of Zenobia's drowned body paralleled that of Fuller in the Ocean and cautioned readers against female deviance.

Other women, besides Fuller, were also associated with Zenobia. Georgiana Bruce Kirby, who spent her youth at Brook Farm, refers to an unidentified female resident as Zenobia's inspiration and writes: "'Zenobia,' a friend of Miss Peabody, was a resident at the Farm. She died lately in Florence, Italy." [19] Lindsay Swift, in her historical account of Brook Farm, writes: "It matters little whether or not Zenobia is a blend of Miss Fuller and

Mrs. Barlow; there certainly is more than an intimation of both."[20]

Among twentieth-century critics, Austin Warren states: "That Miss Fuller furnished the creative 'hint' for Zenobia I do not doubt."[21] On the other hand, Nina Baym challenges the association between Zenobia and Fuller and argues against critics who "have insisted that she [Fuller] is the source for Zenobia, because Zenobia like Miss Fuller is a feminist residing at a utopian community."[22] As Baym points out, Fuller was a frequent visitor to Brook Farm and held a series of Conversations with the farmers, but she was never a "residing" member there. Although Baym argues that Fuller's feminist ideal was "spiritual and non corporeal" and does not coincide with Zenobia's overt sexuality, Fuller's feminism held more subversive characteristics than Baym acknowledges. Fuller's romantic relationship with an Italian Ossoli and her consequent marriage to him surely was not received favorably by her Boston friends.

Margaret Fuller in her Boston years might have threatened Hawthorne in her intellectual vigor and charismatic attraction, especially to women including his future wife Sophia Peabody. On January 13, 1841, three months before joining the Ripleys at Brook Farm, Hawthorne wrote from Salem to Sophia who was, then, residing at the new Peabody house in Boston:

> Dearest, how camest thou by the head-ache? Thou shoudst have dreamed of thy husband's breast, instead of that Arabian execution; and then thou wouldst have awaked with a very delicious thrill in thy heart, and no pain in thy head. And what wilt thou do to-day, persecuted little Dove, when thy abiding-place will be a Babel of talkers? Would that Miss Margaret Fuller might lose her tongue!—or my Dove her ears, and so be left wholly to her husband's golden silence! Dearest wife, I truly think that we could dispense with audible speech, and yet never feel the want of an interpreter between our spirits.[23]

Sophia's living situation in Boston connected her to Margaret Fuller's series of Conversations with the educated women of Boston, which had begun November 4, 1839, at Elizabeth Peabody's bookstore in the front parlor of the Peabody house. This passage shows that Hawthorne was not happy about his *fiancée*'s participation in Fuller's Conversations, as he calls this meeting "a Babel of talkers."

The passage also demonstrates that Hawthorne could have been threatened by another mode of relationship, what historians call the nineteenth-century "romantic friendship" among middle-class women. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg calls such a social circle of middle-class women of the period "the Female World of Love and Ritual," the "deeply felt same-sex friendships" which were casually accepted among middle-class women. The rigid gender-role differentiation within the family as well as society, Smith-Rosenberg maintains, "led women and men, in that period, to the emotional segregation from each other's group." In their ideologically and physically segregated sphere, women shared "emotional proximity" to one another.[24]

Fuller's Conversations relied on the financial and spiritual support provided by this homosocial friendship, and created prominent feminist activists. Fuller was not as comfortable when the Conversations were gender mixed according to a participant. One of the feminists, Caroline Healey, a young member of the Conversations, said that when the Conversations were initially held at the Ripley's, in 1839, "Margaret . . . never enjoyed this mixed class, and considered it a failure so far as her own power was concerned." Healey noticed dissonances between Fuller and some of the male participants, such as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Bronson Alcott:

> She and Mr. Emerson met like Pyramus and Thisbe, a blank wall between. With Mr. Alcott she had no patience, and no one of the class seemed to understand how sincere and deep was her interest in the theme.[25]

Although mutually attracted to each other as friends, Healey observes, there was "a blank wall," a psychological or intellectual barrier between Fuller and Emerson. In contrast to such a discordant presence of the prominent men of the age, Healey says, Fuller enjoyed conversations with female participants. She adds: "In no way was Margaret's supremacy so evident as in the impulse she gave to the minds of younger women." Another young female participant, Ednah Dow Cheney, later wrote about the experience she gained at the Conversations as follows:

> I found myself in a new world of thought; a flood of light irradiated all that I had seen in nature, observed in life, or read in books. Whatever

> she spoke of revealed a hidden meaning, and everything seemed to be put into true relation. Perhaps I could best express it by saying that I was no longer the limitation of myself, but I felt that whole wealth of the universe was open to me.[26]

Healey recollects Elizabeth Peabody's special consideration to Fuller in the preface to the collection of her reports of the Conversations: "I was very young to join such a circle; and when she invited me, Elisabeth [sic] had more regard, I think, to Margaret's purse, than to my fitness for the company."[27] Elizabeth Peabody, in 1840, offered her bookstore in Boston as the site for the Conversations free of charge in order to help Fuller financially. On conducting a series of Conversations, Fuller found a confidante in Elizabeth Peabody, who generously provided her assistance.

As an intellectual, Fuller's strength in classics, German philosophy and literature, a genre that traditionally belonged to men, made her an intellectually deviant woman in the nineteenth-century context. Her preference for intellectual and social "free lines," made her a sort of a queer. Henry James says in 1903: ". . . the free lines overscoring the unlikely material, is doubtless partly why the Margaret-ghost, as I have ventured to call it, still unmistakably walks the old passages."[28] From this haunted image of Fuller, both Hawthorne and James found literary materials to create two of the earliest representative female deviants, Zenobia in *The Blithedale Romance* and Olive Chancellor in *The Bostonians*, who bruise themselves "against the narrow limitations of" their "sex" in nineteenth-century New England (4). Both Zenobia and Olive were cruelly punished in the novels by male authors.

In Hawthorne's novel, Coverdale interprets the Blithedale enterprise as an attempt to build a community against the "rusty iron framework of society." They are to show "mankind the example of a life governed by other than the false and cruel principles, on which human society has all along been based" (19). Coverdale's words allude to the alternative principles in the utopian project which opposes the patriarchal system outside. He half-heartedly participates in this experiment, cynically observing that the "presence of Zenobia caused our heroic enterprise to show like an illusion, a masquerade, a pastoral, a counterfeit Arcadia, in which we grown-up men and women were making a play-day of the years that were given us to live

in" (21).

Zenobia's "queenliness," Coverdale thinks, makes Blithedale somewhat similar to a matriarchal society. The predominantly matriarchal structure of Blithedale is seen in the dissonance between the Author's "Preface" and the textual narrative of *The Blithedale Romance*. Introducing the historical source for the novel in the "Preface," the "Author" enumerates the names of the forefathers of the historic Brook Farm project starting from "Ripley, with whom rests the honorable paternity of the Institution" and going on to "Dana, Dwight, Channing, Burton, Parker, . . . " (3). In the body of Coverdale's narrative, however, those founders disappear, leaving only Hollingsworth, "the self-concentrated Philanthropist" (2) as the closest to the original Brook Farm patriarchs. Hollingsworth is certainly an influential character in the novel but he is not the central decision-maker of Blithedale. Furthermore, according to Coverdale, Hollingsworth is "never really interested in" the "socialist scheme" of the utopian experiment and devotes his "heart" to his own scheme, "the reformation of criminals" (36). Instead of placing a patriarchal figure at the center of Blithedale, Coverdale's narrative places Zenobia, "the high-spirited woman, bruising herself against the narrow limitations of her sex" as a matriarchal figure (2). Welcoming the rest of the members to Blithedale on the first night of the experiment, Zenobia assumes her position:

> "I am the first-comer, so I take the part of hostess, for today, and welcome you as if to my own fireside. You shall be my guests, too, at supper. Tomorrow, if you please, we will be brethren and sisters, and begin our new life from day-break." (16)

From the first day at Blithedale, Coverdale emphasizes Zenobia's centrality as the leader of their "adventurous enterprise" (18).

The historical Brook Farm Association had egalitarian principles just like many other such utopian communities in the nineteenth-century. These communities provided women much more equal opportunity than the society outside. Georgiana Kirby writes about her excitement when she joined Brook Farm at the age of twenty-three:

> I received a most cordial recognition from all others. The very air seemed to hold more exhilarating qualities than any I had breathed

> before. Democracy and culture made the animus of the association. Had the world denied you opportunity for education? Here your highest needs should be satisfied. Able scholars were at your service.[29]

For a young immigrant woman who was given a special educational opportunity, Brook Farm was "getting to be" like "a heavenly world." In its constitution the equality of both sexes was promised: "all rights, privileges, guarantees, and obligations of members expressed or implied . . . shall be understood to belong equally to both sexes."[30]

Carol A. Kolmerten states that women at Brook Farm were predominantly single and enjoyed their community life extensively in comparison to the misery the married women in other communities suffered. The women at Brook Farm were between sixteen and twenty-two. They were in control of their decision to stay or leave the Farm whenever they wanted. These women could both enjoy and escape the confinement of the narrow circle of domestic life that even married utopian communitarians could not escape. Cultural and educational opportunities were offered to young women and men equally at Brook Farm. Lucy M. Freibert supports Kolmerten's argument: "the most significant condition favorable to women was that no religious test could be required" in Brook Farm, so that it stopped any single religious sect from imposing the traditional pressures on women to be wives.[31]

Brook Farm hosted notable female reformers, writers, and musicians as well as their male counterparts. Margaret Fuller, Lydia Maria Child, and Elizabeth Peabody enhanced the culture and educational life of the Farmers. Fuller's celebrity status at Brook Farm attracted the members of the Farm to her Conversations. Kirby writes about the first appearance of Fuller at Brook Farm:

> She had been previously described to me as one in whom the woman, saint, and scholar were united, and my great reverence, for one whose being was consecrated to the highest purposes, and who was greatly in need of rest, made me keep myself at a careful distance, lest I might intrude on her.[32]

Kirby's admiration and enthusiasm for Fuller is akin to that exhibited by the female members at the Conversations at the Peabody bookstore.

Priscilla's "devoted admiration" for Zenobia in the text reflects what young women expressed toward Margaret Fuller at her Conversations and at Brook Farm lectures. From her first night at Blithedale, Priscilla clings to Zenobia. At her arrival, standing near the door, Priscilla fixes "a pair of large, brown, melancholy eyes upon Zenobia—only upon Zenobia!" (27) Coverdale considers such "devoted admiration" of young women particularly feminine (32). In responding to Coverdale's comment on Priscilla, Zenobia openly accepts Priscilla:

> She [Zenobia] went towards Priscilla, took her hand, and passed her own rosy finger-tips, with a pretty, caressing movement over the girl's hair. The touch had a magical effect. So vivid a look of joy flushed up beneath those fingers, that it seemed as if the sad and wan Priscilla had been snatched away, and another kind of creature substituted in her place. (34-35)

Receiving Zenobia's approval, Priscilla becomes "no longer a foreign element" in the community (35). Zenobia, with her "magical" touch, transforms Priscilla into "another kind of creature."

Zenobia perceives Priscilla differently from Coverdale, who constantly molds Priscilla into a sentimentalist stereotype. The close bond between Zenobia and Priscilla appears in Chapter VIII "A Modern Arcadia" where Coverdale is surprised to have heard "a girlish laugh" and "merry outbreaks" coming from both Priscilla and Zenobia. The two women have been "a-maying" together with flowers for May-Day (58):

> They had found anemones in abundance, houstonias by the handful, some columbines, a few long-stalked violets, filled up their basket with the delicate spray of shrubs and trees. . . . Zenobia . . . had been decking out Priscilla. Being done with a good deal of taste, it made her look more charming than I should have thought possible, with my recollection of the wan, frost-nipt girl, as heretofore described. (58-59)

The theme of May-Day in the ancient festival calendar is the coming of age of the maiden goddess.[33] Following the tradition of goddess worship, Zenobia transforms "the wan and spiritless Priscilla" into "the flowery May Queen." Noticing "a weed of evil odor and ugly aspect" among all the other attractive flowers decked around Priscilla, Coverdale perceives "a slightly malicious purpose" in Zenobia's arrangement (59). Zenobia's words explain her intention. In contrast to Coverdale, who seeks in Priscilla and her flowers a flawless artistic representation of "the very picture of the New England spring," Zenobia notes "her wildness" and says:

> "Such a quiet little body as she seemed, one would not have expected that! Why, as we strolled the woods together, I could hardly keep her from scrambling up the trees like a squirrel! She has never before known what it is the live in the free air, and so it intoxicates her as if she were sipping wine." (59)

Under the influence of Zenobia, Priscilla is transformed from a fragile girl to an active woman full of wild energy at Blithedale.

Fuller's feminist ideal coincides with Zenobia's arguments concerning women's rights in Hawthorne's novel. One Sunday out in the woods, Zenobia declaims "with great earnestness and passion, nothing short of anger, on the injustice which the world did to women" by depriving them of their opportunity "in public" (120). Neither Coverdale, Hollingsworth, nor Priscilla agrees with Zenobia's feminist assertion. Interpreting Coverdale's smile as ridiculing her opinion, Zenobia "with a flash of anger in her eyes" prophesizes the future stage of the women's rights movement:

> "It is my belief—yes, and my prophecy, should I die before it happens—that, when my sex shall achieve its rights, there will be ten eloquent women, where there is now one eloquent man. . . . You let us write a little, it is true, on a limited range of subjects. But the pen is not for woman. Her power is too natural and immediate. It is with the living voice, alone, that she can compel the world to recognize the light of her intellect and the depth of her heart!" (120)

Fuller might not agree with the statement "the pen is not for women," for her prophetic tone in her essay *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* coincides with Zenobia's assertion. Coverdale traces Zenobia's "anger" to her personal trouble stating that women "are not natural reformers, but become such by the pressure of exceptional misfortune" (121). Coverdale's following assertion resonates with then prevailing domestic ideology, the Cult of True Womanhood. He confesses his conviction on women's spirituality to become moral guardians:

> ". . . Heaven grant that the ministry of souls may be left in charge of women! The Gates of the Blessed City will be thronged with the multitude that enter in, when that day comes! The task belongs to woman. God meant it for her." (121)

Zenobia bluntly ignores Coverdale's statement.

Although Coverdale tries to support Zenobia's opinion, the discussion on women's rights does not develop in Coverdale's narrative since he is more interested in the physical and material aspects of Zenobia's past and present. Zenobia's assertion is even more severely undercut by the crude insinuation on "these petticoated monstrosities" by Hollingsworth, who demonstrates the "intensity of masculine egotism," which even Coverdale cannot condone (123). In the light of Coverdale's privileging a heterosexual romantic plot as well as Hollingsworth's disdain for "petticoated" women activists, Zenobia's speech becomes that of a hysteric in the scene.

3. Mesmeric Lore

One of Hawthorne's letters to Sophia refers to what he calls the "Arabian execution" of the popular Mesmeric lore, a topic prominent in *The Blithedale Romance*. Having been encouraged by her elder sister Elizabeth, Sophia tried Mesmerism as a treatment for her persistent migraine headaches. When she was still in Salem, Elizabeth had translated a French article on Franz Anton Mesmer into English. In the Peabody household, Mesmerism had been accepted without much hesitation because of Dr. Peabody's profession as a dentist and a homeopath. Although it was considered exotic in Salem,

Mesmerism was quite popular in Boston in the 1830s.

It is clear that the ambiguous status of this popular practice generates special effects from the beginning of the novel. Although Zenobia does not practice Mesmerism or Spiritualism herself, Coverdale feels that her magnetic power is taking hold of him immediately after he enters Blithedale. Arriving at the farm in a snowstorm, Coverdale becomes ill and spends the first morning "cursing" his day "as bitterly as patient Job himself" in his "sleeping-room" (40). Hollingsworth and Zenobia are constantly at his side to take care of him. In his delirium, Coverdale whispers to Hollingsworth who visits him at his bedside: "Zenobia is an enchantress! . . . She is a sister of the Veiled Lady! That flower in her hair is a talisman." Hollingsworth reports this to Zenobia, and tells her that Coverdale talks about her "being a witch, and of some magical property in the flower" she wears in her hair (45). Zenobia dismisses Coverdale's assessment:

> "It is an idea worthy of a feverish poet," said she, laughing, rather compassionately, and taking out the flower. "I scorn to owe anything to magic. Here, Mr. Hollingsworth: —you may keep the spell, while it has any virtue in it: but I cannot promise you not to appear with a new one, tomorrow. It is the one relic of my more brilliant, my happier days!" (45)

Although Zenobia denies any magical association, her control over Coverdale in his sick chamber continues even after his delirium passes away. Zenobia's "daily flower" in her hair works as a talisman which almost hypnotizes Coverdale until he feels that "Zenobia's sphere" has exerted "a vastly greater influence" upon him. He states:

> Zenobia's sphere, I imagine impressed itself powerfully on mine, and transformed me, during this period of my weakness, into something like a mesmerical clairvoyant. (46-47)

Coverdale himself becomes the subject of a Mesmerical clairvoyance with Zenobia as his Mesmerist. To escape from her influence, Coverdale attempts to connect her to "a ridiculous piece of romance" in which she is subject to male control. Coverdale, however, fails to uncover Zenobia's past, being enchanted again by "her eyes" which challenge him "to drop a plummet-

line down into the depths of her consciousness" (47-48). Coverdale, thus, loses his ability to set forth an authoritative narrative. Closing his own eyes to escape from Zenobia's gaze, Coverdale associates her with witchery: "I see nothing now, unless it be the face of a sprite, laughing at me from the bottom of a deep well" (48). Coverdale helplessly yields to Zenobia's power, compelled to eat her gruel, which is "very wretched stuff, with almost invariably the smell of pine-smoke upon it, like the evil taste that is said to mix itself up with a witch's best concocted dainties" (48).

What Coverdale experiences in his sick chamber is the blurring of gender roles through the practice of Mesmerism. Coverdale, once a spectator of a Mesmerist performance in the town hall, takes the role of trance maiden, powerlessly laying himself down on the bed. He then perceives Zenobia as the source of power, the Mesmerizer or the magician who dominates him. As a trance maiden in his sick chamber, Coverdale loses his authorial control. From this point, the power shifts from Coverdale to Zenobia in their interpersonal relationship. He abhors and rejects Zenobia's magnetic power in spite of her continual presence at his bedside. In her, Coverdale finds "no severe culture." Denying her intellectual capacity, he states: "Her mind. . . was full of weeds" (44). Coverdale observes "the hardihood of her philosophy" and criticizes her feminist idea:

> A female reformer, in her attacks upon society, has an instinctive sense of where the life lies, and is inclined to aim directly at that spot. Especially, the relation between the sexes is naturally among the earliest to attract her notice. (44)

In contrast to Zenobia's threatening presence in the sick chamber, "Hollingsworth's more than brotherly attendance" gives Coverdale "inexpressible comfort" (41). Coverdale says that "there was something of the woman molded into the great, stalwart frame of Hollingsworth; nor was he ashamed of it, as men often are of what is best in them, nor seemed ever to know that there was such a soft place in his heart" (31). Coverdale even associates a domestic "fireside" imagery, which usually suggests a high form of femininity in the nineteenth-century sentimental formula, with Hollingsworth:

> Methought there could not be two such men alive, as Hollingsworth. There never was any blaze of a fireside that warmed and cheered me, in the down-sinkings and shiverings of my spirit, so effectually as did the light out of those eyes, which lay so deep and dark under his shaggy brows. (42)

Unlike Zenobia, who cannot conceal "the queenliness of her presence" in the "homely simplicity of her dress," Hollingsworth attends to Coverdale as a caring nurse. At the "crisis" of his "fever," Coverdale wants "Hollingsworth to let nobody else enter the room, but continually to make" him "sensible of his [Hollingsworth's] own presence by a grasp of the hand, a word—a prayer, if he thought good to utter it" (42). In all this we see that Coverdale undergoes an emasculation process in the sick chamber, as if altered into a medium under the influence of spiritual manipulation.

When fully recovered from his illness in Chapter VII, Coverdale, a fictional storyteller in the novel, receives a letter from Margaret Fuller. Handed the letter by Priscilla, Coverdale inquires of her: "[D]id you ever see Miss Margaret Fuller?" (52) Juxtaposing the fictional and the real world by using Fuller's name, Hawthorne's text here successfully recapitulates the Moonlight effect in *The Scarlet Letter* to create "a neutral territory, somewhere between the real world and fairy-land, where the Actual and the Imaginary may meet," the space where "Ghosts might enter here, without affrighting us."[34] Mesmerist props employed in the Priscilla-Margaret Fuller association thus serve to blur the line between reality and the fictional world.

Having fully recovered from his sickness, Coverdale again starts telling the story as the primary narrator of the novel. He regains his full senses and can form a critical view of Hollingsworth's philanthropic scheme to construct "[h]is visionary edifice" to "devote himself and a few disciples," including Coverdale, "to the reform and mental culture of [their] criminal brethren" (56).

4. The Narrator and Stories within a Story

Now I will go back to the beginning of the novel to analyze its narrative structure. As in many other modern novels, *The Blithedale Romance* describes the experience of a man, a male observer. Miles Coverdale, the

first-person narrator of the novel, is a city-dweller who enjoys the freedom to move in the crowd or to frequent pubs and theaters, the symbolic modern scenes in urban settings. Walter Benjamin describes Baudelaire's vantage point in urban Paris as the *flâneur* who acquires a special privilege in a modern aesthetic. Hawthorne presents his narrator Coverdale on the streets of Boston as the *flâneur*, the male stroller, who occupies the central position in the novel.[35] Coverdale begins his story as follows:

> The evening before my departure for Blithedale, I was returning to my bachelor-apartments, after attending the wonderful exhibition of the Veiled Lady, when an elderly-man of rather shabby appearance met me in an obscure part of the street. (5)

He then recounts his encounter with Old Moodie who asked a favor of him. Coverdale's frivolous and careless attitude discourages Old Moodie from entrusting his daughter, Priscilla, to Coverdale's hands to deliver her to Blithedale. The crucial opportunity offered by Old Moodie for Coverdale to become a heroic guide for Priscilla slips out of Coverdale's hands. This relegates him to the position of "a minor poet" and a bystander as far as the novel's main storyline is concerned. Coverdale loses the opportunity to take the leading role in a romantic plot not just with Priscilla but also with Zenobia despite the fact that he is attracted to both. The two women take Coverdale lightly and successively choose Hollingsworth as their romantic partner.

Coverdale's frivolousness continues until just before he takes off for Blithedale. He is continually drinking "particularly fine Sherry" at night to finish it "with a friend, the next forenoon, before setting out for Blithedale" (8). Such a reckless attitude drives him to catch "a fearful cold" on his journey from town to Blithedale in "the bluster and the snow-spray" (12).

It is noticeable early in their relationship that Coverdale establishes his narrative supremacy as the only authentic writer, dismissing Zenobia's creative talent as a storyteller. Coverdale sees in her "a fine intellect" and recognizes her extraordinary ability in oratorical performances, but he judges that "its natural tendency lay in another direction than toward literature" (15). He states: "Zenobia had the gift of telling a fanciful little story, off hand, in a way that made it greatly more effective, than it was usually found to be, when

she afterwards elaborated the same production with her pen" (107). Access to the "pen" is reserved for Coverdale, within his exclusive domain, as he marginalizes the possibility of Zenobia's literary talent.

Both Coverdale and Zenobia present different interpretations and even different stories concerning the "Veiled Lady" in the course of the novel. By comparing the two versions of the "Veiled Lady," we may find out how woman's culture functions in the novel as well as in nineteenth-century society at large.

(1) Zenobia's Narrative: "The Silvery Veil"

Zenobia takes the role of *flâneuse*, which is not supposed to be available to her in the novel's formal setting. As a *flâneuse* in the novel, Zenobia creates ruptures in the text challenging Coverdale's heterosexual romantic narrative. Zenobia functions as a literary representative of the woman's culture in mid-nineteenth century America. This woman's culture pervades the text and creates a utopian space which temporarily blurs the normative functions of social, familial, and gender systems.[36]

In Zenobia's tale, "The Silvery Veil," the Veiled Lady, who is supposed to represent a domestic angel according to Brodhead and other critics, becomes a spooky presence. Zenobia's tale challenges Coverdale's romanticism and reveals her artist self as a *flâneuse* in the form of an enigmatic Medusa-Veiled Lady. According to Buci-Glucksmann, the "look of Medusa, this apotropaic zone of the Greeks from which one turns away in fascination mixed with horror" forms the basis of the Baudelairean concept of modernity.[37] Infusing her tale with the archaic fear which the bisexual monster provokes, Zenobia practices feminist-modernist art in her literary attempt.

Zenobia's story presents the Veiled Lady as the "Shadowy phenomena," the ghostly existence, who carries life "which seemed to have no more reality than the candlelight image of one's self, which peeps at us outside of a dark window pane." Zenobia's story begins with a male homosocial group, a "party of young gentlemen," in the town gossiping about the mystery of the Veiled Lady "over a bottle or two of champagne" (108). In her story, Zenobia reveals how the spectators project their own hidden fears and desires onto the mysterious veiled being. Some see the identity of "this strange creature" as "the daughter of one of our most distinguished families," others see her

as a conjurer who plays "her juggling tricks" to create "a spectral illusion" (109). Concerning her hidden visage, some say that the veil covers the "most beautiful countenance in the world," others say the "most hideous and horrible face of a corpse," or a "monstrous visage" like "Medusa's, and one great red eye in the center of the forehead" (109-10). Giving the hidden face a chimerical image as well as feminine beauty, Zenobia mingles the myth of Medusa with a romantic plot.

As if to mock Coverdale, Zenobia's story sends "Theodore," a young urban dandy with "a soft and pretty name," on a quest for the identity of the Veiled Lady. Zenobia's Veiled Lady, however, is not a subservient speechless woman in bondage, nor a sleeping beauty quietly waiting for a hero-prince to rescue her. First of all, she demonstrates a "very strange" movement which thwarts Theodore's gaze:

> Very strange, it must be confessed, was the movement with which the figure floated to-and-fro over the carpet, with the silvery veil covering her from head to foot; so impalpable, so ethereal, so without substance, as the texture seemed, yet hiding her every outline in an impenetrability like that of midnight. Surely, she did not walk! She floated, and flitted, and hovered about the room;—no sound of a footstep, no perceptible motion of a limb;—it was as if a wandering breeze wafted her before it, at its own wild and gentle pleasure. (111-12)

Instead of crying out in surprise at the strange young man's intrusion, the Veiled Lady summons Theodore: "Come forth, Theodore!" (112). She then explains her existential problem to Theodore and challenges him: "Thou canst: go hence, and think of me no more; or, at thy option, thou canst lift this mysterious veil, beneath which I am a sad and lonely prisoner, in a bondage which is worse to me than death" (112-13). The Veiled Lady, then, gives Theodore a riddle, asking him to kiss her lips over the veil, and says if he kisses her without seeing her face, "from that instant, Theodore, thou shalt be mine, and I thine, with never more a veil between us!" (113) Her proposal to "pledge himself, for life and eternity" has, however, "almost injured and insulted" Theodore (112). Instead of becoming a romantic rescuer of the poor prisoner of magic, Theodore is now trapped by imaginations of his own acute danger. Theodore's position as a *flâneur* is threatened by the Veiled

Lady's refusal to permit him to look upon her face. Whether "he should salute the lips of a dead girl, or the jaws of a skeleton, or the grinning cavity of a monster's mouth" (113), he is not sure at this point. The panic drives him to fling the veil upward without the Lady's consent and he catches "a glimpse of a pale, lovely face, beneath." The "apparition" of the Veiled Lady vanishes, leaving Theodore alone with his "retribution" "to pine, forever and ever, for another sight of that dim mournful face—which might have been his life-long, household, fireside joy—to desire, and waste life in a feverish quest, and never meet it more" (114).

Zenobia's ghost story is a revision of the myth of Medusa, a classic Greek monster. Terms such as "jaws," "cavity of a monster's mouth" and "teeth" in his reveries suggest fear of castration. Attributing a power similar to that of Medusa to the Veiled Lady's "pale, lovely face," the encounter fixes Theodore's destiny, like a man changed into a stone, transfixed by the memory of his momentary glance. Zenobia resurrects a beautiful image of Medusa[38] who keeps flying smoothly from one corner to another multiplying her existence and her meaning. The male gaze cannot discern either her position or her nature. Instead, Medusa's gaze in Greek myth transforms its victim into a stone. Zenobia's story takes the form of what Hélène Cixous calls "woman's writing" (*écriture féminine*).[39] Interweaving the archetypal narrative of the legendary Medusa with the story of the Veiled Lady, Zenobia does not let a conventional romance take over. Alluding to the Veiled Lady as Medusa, Zenobia satirizes the fear of castration. This example of "modern beauty" recalls Benjamin's account of this concept in Baudelaire:

> [It] is marked with the fatality of being one day antiquity, and it reveals this to whoever witnesses its birth. Here we meet the quintessence of the unforeseen, which for Baudelaire is an inalienable quality of the beautiful. The face of modernity itself blasts us with its immemorial gaze. Such was the gaze of Medusa for the Greeks.[40]

Zenobia's revision of the story thus connects to the artistic experiment of "modern beauty" which features an "immemorial gaze," the "gaze of Medusa for the Greeks" as Benjamin analyzes. Resurrecting the Medusa both with an extraordinary gazing power and a beautiful face in her version of the Veiled Lady, Zenobia presents herself as a *flâneuse* and demonstrates the possibility

of woman's writings as opposed to masculine discourse.

Referring to Greek Mythology to understand the deeper meaning of existence was a method Margaret Fuller often employed in her talks and writings. In her Conversations, Fuller proposed to discuss Greek mythology so that she might expound on the tales and characters to respond to her analysis to compel them to define words, to turn their impressions into thoughts, and to systematize these thoughts.[41] Emerson once said about Fuller's Conversations, "I assure you, there is more Greek than Bostonian spoken at the meeting!"[42] Zenobia's tale resembles something Fuller might have talked about, using her thorough knowledge of Greek Mythology.

The rest of Zenobia's story describes a lady "amid the knot of visionary transcendentalists" giving way, in the Magician's sleight of hand, to a pale maiden, Priscilla, in exile. What is not stated in Zenobia's tale is whether the Veiled Lady who has vanished from the city is this young maiden or not. The Veiled Lady with the decisive commanding voice resembles a "woman of some nerve," or Zenobia herself. The graphic metaphor of male control in the figure of the Magician with a silvery veil makes Priscilla almost faint. Even in a merely fictional story, Zenobia's rejection is what Priscilla fears the most (116).

(2) Coverdale's Counter Narrative: "Fauntleroy"

For Coverdale to take narrative control in this novel is to impose another tale which counters Zenobia's literary power. Zenobia's legend of "The Silvery Veil" and the spectral legend "Fauntleroy" in Chapter XXII make a pair of freestanding tales in the novel. "Fauntleroy" can be interpreted as Coverdale's search for the "fathers" who can exert power against the enigmatic feminine force presented in Zenobia's tale. It stands as a masculine tale as opposed to Zenobia's example of "woman's writing."

Leaving Blithedale temporarily, Coverdale establishes himself in "a certain respectable hotel" in town as "a man of leisure." Back in the city, he tries to get rid of "all the effeminacy of past days" experienced at the Blithedale. Coverdale attempts to regain his narrative identity as a *flâneur* in "a back-room of the third story" of the building (145). Walter Benjamin states that the "*flâneur* seeks refuge in the crowd" which functions as the "veil through which the familiar city is transformed for the *flâneur* into phantasmagoria."[43] Showing a little hesitancy to be completely merged into

"the stir of the hotel, . . . the loud voices of guests, landlord, or barkeeper" and the tumult of the city crowd, Coverdale reads a dull novel and takes "a rocking-chair" as a perch from which to gaze upon the activities of the city dwellers:

> So I spent the first day, and the greater part of the second, in the laziest manner possible, in a rocking-chair, inhaling the fragrance of a series of cigars, with my legs and slippered feet horizontally disposed, and in my hand a novel, purchased of a railroad bibliopolist. (147)

Returning to his voyeuristic position again, Coverdale starts looking at the phantasmagoric exhibition of city life, presented in "the rear of a range of buildings, which appeared to be spacious, modern and calculated for fashionable residences" (148). As his observation post at the window shows, his attitude toward the crowd is one of superiority. Coverdale states:

> But, to return to my window, at the back of the hotel, together with a due contemplation of the fruit-trees, the grape vines, the buttonwood-tree, the cat, the birds, and many other particulars, I failed not to study the row of fashionable dwellings to which all these appertained. (149)

Coverdale observes the lives of the urban dwellers, such as a young dandy "in a dressing-gown, standing before the glass and brushing his hair, for a quarter-of-an-hour together," "a middle-aged gentleman" "papa" joining his family after a day's work, and "a lady, showily dressed, with a curling front of what must have been false hair, and reddish brown" commanding her servants "before the serving up of dinner" (151).

Coverdale's imperial eyes at his window are suddenly challenged, again, by Zenobia, who happens to occupy one of the "fashionable dwellings" in which she stays when she is in town. Appearing "at the window, with color much heightened, and eyes . . . shooting bright arrows," she directs an attacking gaze toward Coverdale's "sensitivities as a gentleman" (158). He states:

> If the truth must behold, far as her flight-shot was, those arrows hit the mark. She signified her recognition of me by a gesture with her head

> and hand, comprising at once a salutation and dismissal. The next moment, she administered one of those pitiless rebukes which a woman always has at hand, ready for an offense, . . . by letting down a white linen curtain between the festoons of the damask ones. It fell like the drop-curtain of a theatre, in the interval between the acts. (158-59)

Having been "excluded from everybody's confidence" on his visit to Zenobia, Priscilla, and Westervelt at Zenobia's drawing-room the following day, Coverdale determines to "seek an interview" with old Moodie to grasp the secret kept by this man (174).

Just like Theodore in the beginning of Zenobia's story, "The Silvery Veil," Coverdale looks for Old Moodie in a male homosocial sphere, a saloon where he used to spend his "young and idle days and nights" (174). Old Moodie appears, gliding about "like a spirit," or a ghost (123):

> He was certainly the wretchedest old ghost in the world, with his crazy hat, the dingy handkerchief about his throat, his suit of threadbare gray, and especially that patch over his right eye, behind which he always seemed to be hiding himself. (179)

Intoxicating him with wine, Coverdale gradually finds in the ghostly old man with dingy clothes "the connoisseur" of wine with a past as a gentleman:

> . . . Instead of the mean, slouching, furtive, painfully depressed air of an old city-vagabond, more like a gray kennel-rat than any other living thing, he began to take the aspect of a decayed gentleman. (181)

Coverdale chooses to add "a trifle of romantic and legendary license" as if to challenge Zenobia's legendary story of the Veiled Lady. His narrative, however, is more realistic than Zenobia's tale, quite accurately detailing the mid-nineteenth century immigrant quarter in Boston, "the New England metropolis," where Fauntleroy (Old Moodie) "had taken up his abode, under another name, in a squalid street, or court of the older portion of the city" (183-84).

> There he dwelt among poverty-stricken wretches, sinners, and forlorn,

> good people, Irish, and whomsoever else were neediest. Many families were clustered in each house together, above stairs and below, in the little peaked garrets, and even in the dusky cellars. (184)

Historic Boston in the mid-nineteenth century was a place of refugees from famine in Ireland. A "stately habitation"—an "old colonial Governor had built it, and lived there, long ago"—was "a great room where . . . slept twenty Irish bedfellows and died in Fauntleroy's chamber, which" the "embroidered and white-wigged ghost" of the Governor still haunted (184). Here, Coverdale as the narrator realistically describes the miseries and poverty of the Irish immigrants to Boston as occupants of the historic buildings from the Puritan past. For North American cities such as New York and Boston, the poverty of Irish immigrants became a social problem from the 1830s to 1840s.[44]

In Chapter XXII, Coverdale successfully resurrects "Fauntleroy," "a man of wealth, and magnificent tastes, and prodigal expenditure," from the ghostly Old Moodie (182). Coverdale furthermore traces the hidden kin relation of Zenobia with Moodie and Priscilla, which eventually decides his daughters' destiny. According to Old Moodie, he holds the legal authority to determine who is to inherit his brother's wealth. His choice is to lead the life of "a beggar, and go meanly clad, and hide himself behind a forgotten ignominy" (192). He further says: "Ah, but, in Zenobia, I live again!" Old Moodie sees "Fauntleroy" as his lost persona, who "still shines through her!" (192) Giving Zenobia one condition—to be "kind—be no less kind than sisters are—to my poor Priscilla," (192) Moodie makes Zenobia a surrogate-custodian of Priscilla, keeping the final authority of a father for himself. The "Fauntleroy" chapter reveals the vulnerability of Zenobia's status as an heiress. Though Coverdale first perceived Blithedale as "a counterfeit Arcadia" because of Zenobia's presence (21), he now sees Zenobia as a queen who can be dethroned according to the will of her father.

Chapter XXIII "A Village-Hall" is the conclusion of the two preceding ghost stories, "The Silvery Veil" and "Fauntleroy." Setting the Veiled Lady as the central figure again, this chapter functions as Coverdale's revision of Zenobia's "The Silvery Veil." Coverdale cites "some stranger stories than ever were written in a romance" told by "a pale men in blue spectacles":

> He [the man in blue spectacles] cited instances of the miraculous power of one human being over the will and passions of another; insomuch that settled grief was but a shadow, beneath the influence of a man possessing this potency, and the strong love of years melted away like a vapor. . . . Human character was but soft wax in his hands; and guilt, or virtue, only the forms into which he should see fit to mould it. (198)

Coverdale thinks the story "unutterable" and listens to him with "horror and disgust"(198). He connects "the miraculous power" with the epoch of rapping spirits, and all the wonders that have followed in their train" (136) stating:

> We are pursuing a downward course, in the eternal march, and thus bring ourselves into the same range with beings whom death, in requital of their gross and evil lives, had degraded below humanity. (199)

Coverdale fears the blurring of the existing spiritual and material orders. "To hold intercourse with spirits of this order," he says, "we must stoop, and grovel in some element more vile than earthly dust." Coverdale shows his conservative attitude towards any kind of confusion of existing boundaries:

> These goblins, if they exist at all, are but the shadows of past mortality, outcasts, mere refuse-stuff, adjudged unworthy of the eternal world, and, on the most favorable supposition, dwindling gradually into nothingness. The less we have to say to them, the better; lest we share their fate! (199)

Westervelt, in "Oriental robes, looking like one of the enchanters of the Arabian Nights," (199) works as an extension of Zenobia's magnetic power in Coverdale's conscience. This power constantly threatens and endangers Coverdale's psyche. Westervelt and Zenobia are similar in their Mesmeric capacity, distinguished appearance, and secret knowledge concerning events. Just like Zenobia who speaks of a new era for women, Westervelt speaks of "a new era that was dawning upon the world" (200).

The exhibition of the Veiled Lady is disrupted by Hollingsworth, who takes Priscilla off the stage and away from the Mesmerizer's hands. Unlike

the Medusa-Veiled Lady in Zenobia's tale, Coverdale secures the Priscilla-Veiled Lady under the protection of a strong male. Instead of challenging or questioning the man who summons her to "the shelter of his arms," this Veiled Lady, without any hesitation, immediately accepts Hollingsworth's hands uttering "a shriek and fled to Hollingsworth, like one escaping from her deadliest enemy, and was safe forever" (203). Coverdale keeps his romantic discourse safe, mating Priscilla, a "poor, pallid flower," (193) with Hollingsworth, the strong male. To sustain this romance, Zenobia needs to be eliminated from Coverdale's discourse as a tragic woman who has lost in her competition with Priscilla for Hollingsworth. Zenobia's death is destined when Coverdale gives supremacy to an exclusive heterosexual love plot for one monogamous couple.

5. Blithedale Revisited

Having already directed his story toward Zenobia's destruction, Coverdale remains as an intruder and a spectator of Blithedale in Chapter XXIV "The Masqueraders." Coverdale feels his existence at Blithedale is "nothing but dream-work and enchantment" (206). Despite his suspicion that "some evil thing" has befallen the people there and an "ominous impression," Coverdale exposes his bacchanalian-Dionysian self by enjoying fully-grown grapes while visiting his "hermitage in the heart of the white-pine tree":

> The grapes, which I had watched throughout the summer, now dangled around me in abundant clusters of the deepest purple, deliciously sweet to the flavor which distinguishes nearly all our native and uncultivated grapes. Methought a wine might be pressed out of them, possessing a passionate zest, and endowed with a new kind of intoxicating quality, attended with such bacchanalian ecstasies as the tamer grapes of Madeira, France, and the Rhine, are inadequate to produce. And I longed to quaff a great goblet of it, at that moment! (208)

"While devouring the grapes" from "all sides out of the peep-holes" of his hermitage, Coverdale tries to find the whereabouts of the "fraternity and sisterhood" (208).

The men and women who used to be his co-laborers at Blithedale turn into allegorical figures as a company of jolly masqueraders: an "Indian chief," "the goddess Diana," "a Bavarian broom-girl," "a negro of Jim Crow order," "a Shaker Shepherdess of Arcadia," and "allegoric figures from the Faerie Queen" (209). Having been chased by the masqueraders who found him in his hiding place, Coverdale feels "like a mad poet hunted by chimeras" (211). The passage evokes the frenzied images of Dionysian cults connecting the masquerade to irrational forms of passion and desire. Intoxicated by the grapes he devoured at his hermitage, Coverdale carries his bacchanalian merriment to the scene of the catastrophe of Zenobia's life, to witness "the Oriental princess" being "dethroned" (213).

Coverdale associates the scene with a witchcraft trial, ascribing the roles of "a Puritan magistrate" to Hollingsworth, "the sorceress," still "not aged, wrinkled, and decrepit, but fair enough to tempt Satan with a force reciprocal to his own" to Zenobia, and "the pale victim" to Priscilla (214). The verdict condemning Zenobia has already been rendered. Realizing her complete defeat, Zenobia denounces Hollingsworth's scheme to acquire her wealth, and his subsequent acquisition of Priscilla when she receives Zenobia's wealth from their father, Old Moodie. Zenobia accuses Hollingsworth of being "a monster," a "cold, heartless, self-beginning and self-ending piece of mechanism" (218). She also predicts his future: Hollingsworth will sacrifice Priscilla (220).

Although Zenobia fiercely condemns Hollingsworth, her attitude toward Priscilla is one of caring. Coverdale first imagines that Priscilla is "about to fail" Hollingsworth when she throws herself at the feet of Zenobia. Coverdale observes Priscilla as follows:

> She rose up, stood shivering, like the birch-leaves that trembled over her head, and then slowly tottered, rather than walked, towards Zenobia. Arriving at her feet, she sank down there, in the very same attitude which she had assumed on their first meeting, in the kitchen of the old farm-house. Zenobia remembered it. (219)

To Zenobia, who tells her to go with Hollingsworth, Priscilla brings up their relationship as "sisters." This is Priscilla's "offering of herself, . . . to be

at Zenobia's disposal," but Zenobia rejects it (219). To Priscilla who feels "guilty," Zenobia predicts the young girl's tragic future:

> "Methinks you have but a melancholy lot before you, sitting all alone in that wide, cheerless heart, where, for aught you know—and as I, alas! Believe—the fire which you have kindled may soon go out. Ah, the thought makes me shiver for you! What will you do, Priscilla, when you find no spark among the ashes?" (220)

Priscilla answers: "Die" (220). Zenobia does not find any enduring quality in the relationship between Hollingsworth and Priscilla.

As for the Blithedale project, Zenobia concludes: "Of all varieties of mock-life, we have surely blundered into the very emptiest mockery, in our effort to establish the one true system. I have done with it" (227). Zenobia's last words to Coverdale are her intention to "become a Catholic, for the sake of going into a nunnery," and cover her face "behind the black-veil" forever (227-28).

Upon Zenobia's disappearance, Coverdale still feels Zenobia's presence as a haunting image or a specter saying: "I was affected with a fantasy that Zenobia had not actually gone, but was still hovering about the spot and haunting it" (228). Coverdale, in his encounter with Hollingsworth and Priscilla in later years, perceives the "vindictive shadow" dogging Hollingsworth. Zenobia remains as a ghostly image inscribing herself in Hollingsworth's memory, as she says to Coverdale before her death: "Tell him he has murdered me! Tell him that I'll haunt him!" (226)

Coverdale takes on the task of searching for Zenobia's drowned body with Silas Foster and Hollingsworth. As a witness to the "ugly circumstances of death," he tries to explain Zenobia's suicide in the framework of one of "many village-maidens" who fancy it "well and decorous to die" in the "bosom of the old, familiar stream" (236). No longer having Zenobia's aggressive protest on such an occasion, Coverdale freely sentimentalizes and explains the reasons of her death, successfully restricting her power to the stiffened dead body.

Zenobia's corpse shows "terrible inflexibility" and "rigidity" in Coverdale's eyes. The presentation of Zenobia's rigid body is contrasted with the destiny of young Theodore in her tale. By describing the rigid fixation

of Zenobia's drawn body, Coverdale reverses Zenobia's tale of the Medusan Veiled Lady, making her a victim:

> She knelt, as if in prayer. With the last, choking consciousness, her soul, bubbling out through her lips, it may be, had given itself up to the Father, reconciled and penitent. But her arms! They were bent before her, as if she struggled against Providence in never-ending hostility. Her hands! They were clenched in immitigable defiance. (235)

Searching for Zenobia's body, Hollingsworth unknowingly wounds "her breast" with the iron, and Silas Foster with his "utmost strength," tries in vain "to arrange the arms of the corpse decently by its side," while Coverdale cries, "let that dead woman alone!" (236)

The three men's struggle over how to restore and present Zenobia's corpse parallels another company of three men, namely Emerson, Clarke, and Channing, who carefully restored the corpus of Margaret Fuller's writings after her death in the water. The two female deviants, one in the literary text and the other in literary history, silently submit their bodies and their works respectively to the arrangement of their male friends. In Zenobia's case, Coverdale, Hollingsworth, and Foster finally leave Zenobia's corpse with the "women to do their best with her" (236):

> By-and-by, came three or four withered women, and stood whispering around the corpse, peering at it through their spectacles, holding up their skinny hands, shaking their night-capt heads, and taking counsel of one another's experience what was to be done. With those tire-women, we left Zenobia! (237)

The corpse of Zenobia is given to the community of women to be properly prepared for burial.

At Zenobia's funeral Coverdale associates her death with failing in "prosperity, in the world's sense" and in "the heart's prosperity, in love" (239). Westervelt disagrees with Coverdale and says that "her heart had a manifold adaptation; her constitution an infinite buoyancy, which . . . would have borne her upward, triumphantly, for twenty years to come" (240). Coverdale, however, establishes his narrative supremacy by romanticizing Zenobia, the

flâneuse in the novel, as a defeated heroine.

Coverdale's narrative thus remains as an official "romance" of Blithedale, relegating Zenobia's voice to eternal silence. His confusing confession, "I—I myself—was in love—with PRISCILLA" (247) emphasizes Coverdale's determined commitment to a romantic discourse. Rejecting Zenobia's Medusan-modernist discourse and restoring his own version as the official story, Coverdale suppresses his own desire for Zenobia. He has brought back "a kid-shoe" apparently a "French manufacture" with "a high instep," which was worn by Zenobia until her death in the river and secretly kept it in his bachelor apartment in the city (231-32). "But what, after all, have I to tell? Nothing, nothing, nothing!" (245): Coverdale's confession of the loss of his storytelling ability appears to be more serious than that of his lost love for Priscilla. As the frequent bacchanalian images of an urban saloon and of his hermitage covered with vine trees in Blithedale suggest, Coverdale's artistic expression tends to be Dionysian rather than Apollonian. The disappearance of Zenobia and her Veiled Lady, both of which represent Dionysian energy and passion, means the departure of Coverdale's own artistic energy.

In this paper, I have attempted a reading of Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance* in light of a historical construction of the nineteenth-century Transcendentalist movement. Presenting Zenobia-Margaret Fuller in vivid imageries of tropical flowers and as a narrator of a Medusan Veiled Lady, Hawthorne's text codifies the mid-nineteenth century cultural memories represented by the Transcendentalists, new immigrants, and legacies of the Puritan past in New England. The text presents woman's culture flourishing in Boston, and eventually initiating the radical feminist movement, which separated itself culturally as well as ideologically from the prevailing domestic ideology endorsed by Evangelical women such as the Beecher sisters. Stepping beyond the allocated sphere for women, Margaret Fuller became the symbolic figure for this liberal feminist movement.

Notes

1. Bell Gale Chevigny presents this view of the editorial process of assembling *Memoirs*. Chevigny, *The Woman and the Myth: Margaret Fuller's Life & Writings* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1994), 11.
2. Henry James, *William Wetmore Story and His Friends from Letters, Diaries, and Recollections*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1903), 8-9.
3. Ibid., 128.
4. Ibid., 129.
5. Ibid., 127.
6. Ibid., 127.
7. Chevigny, *The Woman and the Myth*, 11.
8. Chevigny suggests that W. H. Channing was the worst offender in this editorial process for he was the closest friend of Fuller among the three men. Ibid.
9. Richard H. Brodhead, "Veiled Ladies: Toward a History of Antebellum Entertainment," A Norton Critical Edition of Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Blithedale Romance*, ed. Richard H. Millington (New York & London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2011), 333.
10. Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Blithedale Romance* in the *Centenary Edition of the Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne*, Volume III (Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University Press, 1964). Quotations from *The Blithedale Romance* are from this edition.
11. Lawrence Buell, *New England Literary Culture: From Revolution Through Renaissance* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 23-55.
12. Ibid. Buell refers to Catharine Maria Sedgwick and Sylvester Judd as the representative Unitarian novelists. He further argues that Unitarian local-color writers gradually distance their novels from the "theological dimension of village life" and such arguments became "subordinated to the larger anthropological and narrative purposes of anatomizing village institutions and developing a secular plot, and after the 1850s theological concerns dwindle almost to the vanishing point in the work of younger authors." One younger author, Mary Wilkins Freeman, called the village majority in her novel Puritans "with respect to their stubborn and repressed life-style rather than with respect to theology" (53).
13. See Nancy F. Sweet, "Hawthorne and the Women's Rights Movement," Monika M. Elbert, ed., *Nathaniel Hawthorne in Context* (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2018). Sweet includes Sarah and Angelina Grimke who delivered a series of antislavery lectures in New England in her analysis.
14. Such cultural attempts were exhibited in Baudelaire's literary works as Walter Benjamin analyzed in "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century" in Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project,* trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 21-26. George Sand (1804-1876) and Elizabeth Browning (1806-1861) were Fuller's contemporary writers who shared in the international literary culture of women in the period.
15. James, *William Wetmore Story*, 127.
16. "Imagination as Truer Than History," from the *Westminster Review* (October 1852). Cited in the Norton Critical Edition of *The Blithedale Romance*, ed. Seymore Gross and Rosalie Murphy (New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 1978), 271.

17. Orestes Brownson, ed., *Brownson's Quarterly Review*, n.s., 6 (October 1852): 561-64. Quoted in the Norton Critical Edition of *The Blithedale Romance* (1978), 276.
18. *Spectator*, 25 (July 3, 1852): 637-38. Quoted in the Norton Critical Edition, *The Blithedale Romance* (1978), 276.
19. Georgiana Bruce Kirby, *Years of Experience: An Autobiographical Narrative*, 1887 (New York: AMS Press, 1971), 103.
20. Lindsay Swift, *Brook Farm: Its Members, Scholars, and Visitors* (New York: AMS Press, 1971, reprinted from the edition of 1887), 173. Please refer to the following article for other possible models of characters in the novel: Steven Petersheim, "'The Minor Poet' of Hawthorne's *Blithedale Romance*," published on line: 29 July 2016, *ANQ: A Quarterly Journal of Short Articles, Notes and Reviews* 29, no.1: 26-28. DOI: 10.1080/0895769X.2016.1201416. (Routledge).
21. Austin Warren, "Hawthorne, Margaret Fuller, and 'Nemesis,'" *PMLA* 54 (June 1939), cited in Joel Myerson, ed., *Critical Essays on Margaret Fuller* (Boston: G.K. Hall & Company, 1980), 472-76.
22. Nina Baym, "'The Blithedale Romance': A Radical Reading," *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 67, no. 4 (Oct., 1968): 563, note 24.
23. Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Letters, 1813-1843* in *The Centenary Edition of the Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne*, ed. Thomas Woodson, L. New Smith, Norman Holmes Pearson (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1984), 511.
24. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual," *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 53.
25. Caroline W. Healey, *Margaret and Her Friends or Ten Conversations with Margaret Fuller upon The Mythology of the Greeks and Its Expression in Art, Held at the House of the Rev. George Ripley, Bedford Place, Boston Beginning March 1, 1841* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1895), 13.
26. Ednah Dow Cheney, *Reminiscences of Ednah Dow Cheney* (Boston: Lee & Shepard, 1902), 205. Cited in Chevigny, *The Woman and the Myth*, 230.
27. Healey, *Margaret and Her Friends*, 9
28. James, *William Wetmore Story*, 132.
29. Kirby, *Years of Experience*, 99.
30. Article 7, Section 6, "Constitution of the Brook Farm Community," cited in Carol A. Kolmerten, *Women in Utopia: The Ideology of Gender in the American Owenite Communities* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990), 173.
31. Lucy M. Freibert, "Creative Women of Brook Farm," *Women in Spiritual and Communitarian Societies in the United States*, ed. Wendy E. Chmielewski, Louis J. Kern, and Marylyn Klee-Hartzell (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1993), 76-77.
32. Kirby, *Years of Experecnce*, 101.
33. Zsuzsanna Budapest, *The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries* (Oakland, CA: Wingbow Press, 1980), 124-26. Jeffrey Steele says that "Fuller uses the language of flowers to construct a psychological and social allegory about her changed sense of self." Sarah Hale's *Flora's Interpreter* (1833) provided such language to express ranges of feeling unavailable in ordinary language. Jeefrey Steele, "Introduction," *The Essential Margaret Fuller* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992), xix.
34. Nathaniel Hawthorne, "The Custom House," in A Norton Critical Edition of *The Scarlet Letter and Other*

Writings, ed. Leland S. Person (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2005), 29.

35. See editor's essay on Hawthorne's "Urban Observation" in A Norton Critical Edition of *The Blithedale Romance*, ed. Richard H. Millington (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2011), 240-41.
36. George Simmel, *On Women, Sexuality, and Love* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 81.
37. Christine Buci-Glucksmann, *Baroque Reason: The Aesthetics of Modernity*, originally published as *La raison baroque* by Éditions Galilée, Paris, 1984, trans. Patrick Camiller (London: Sage Publications, 1994), 164.
38. Medusa is often associated with castration anxiety. See Tikva Frymer-Kensky, *In the Wake of the Goddess: Women, Culture and the Biblical Transformation of Pagan Myth* (New York: Foncett Columbine, 1992), 278; Some narratives on Medusa present her as an especially beautiful priestess in the temple of Athena, until she was turned into an ugly Gorgon. Her integrity was distorted by the Olympian divinities Athena and Poseidon. For archetypal narratives on Medusa, see Anise Part, *Dancing with Goddesses: Archetypes, Poetry, and Empowerment* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), 3-41.
39. Hélène Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa," *New French Feminism, An Anthology*, ed. Elaine Marks & Isabelle de Courtivron, trans. Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1980), 259.
40. Benjamin, "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century," 23.
41. Megan Marshall, *The Peabody Sisters: Three Women Who Ignited American Romanticism* (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2005), 387.
42. Healey, *Margaret and Her Friends*. The Fuller Conversation topics Healey reports are on "The Mythological Statement," "Story from Novalis. Apollo," "Minerva. The Serpent," "Venus and Psyche," "Cupid and Psyche," and so on.
43. Benjamin, "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century," 21.
44. Hidetaka Hirota, *Expelling the Poor: Atlantic Seaboard States and the Nineteenth-Century Origins of American Immigration Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), Chapter 2, "Problems of Irish Poverty." Hirota states: "In the decade between 1825 and 1835, the Catholic population of Boston grew fourfold from 5,000 to 20,900" (50) caused by transatlantic migration from Ireland.