

Henry Hughes and Hawthorne: The South in the Social Dynamics of Controversy

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On July 4, 1853, a week before he sailed to Liverpool as consul, Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote Evert A. Duyckinck to thank him for his kindness in sending him the *Literary World* for many years. In the same letter Hawthorne promised to send “scraps of information about literature or literary people, which might suitably fill a column of your paper.”¹ The journal discontinued publication in December of the same year without carrying any “scraps of information” by Hawthorne. The mutually profitable and solid relationship between the New Englander and the New Yorker had cooled and nearly ended, and the correspondence Hawthorne carried on with Duyckinck in Liverpool totalled only three letters of introduction of people. Yet one of the letters in which he introduced Henry Hughes to Duyckinck is worthy of special academic attention, since it can be said to be the only communication by which Hawthorne fulfilled his solemn promise of any small service in return for “your favors towards me, of such ancient date, and so persistently kept up” (CE XVI 700). It helps demonstrate Hawthorne’s detached attitude to reform and his logic of heterogeneity which are “of such ancient date, and so persistently kept up.” In the pages that follow I will point out that Hawthorne’s mention of Hughes in this letter bears great importance for social and historical analysis of the abolition question, and then argue that Hawthorne’s interest in Hughes’s social ideas enhanced a change in Hawthorne’s attitudes towards the South and its social philosophy.

The letter in question was written on September 22, 1853, about two months after Hawthorne’s arrival in Liverpool.

Allow me to introduce to you Henry Hughes, Esq. of Mississippi, who has been recently travelling in Europe. He wishes for advice from some gentleman competent to give it, in relation to a work which he proposes to publish, and the nature of which he will himself explain to you. Any good office you may have it in your own power to do him will be considered as a real favor to myself. (CE XVII 125)

The September 22, 1853 entry in *The English Notebooks* begins: “Nothing very important has happened lately” (CE XXI 39). Yet in the same entry Hawthorne first recognizes the brutalities inflicted on the sailors aboard American ships, which will later be penetratingly discussed in his letters in terms of laboring whites vs. Southern slaves. The letter quoted above seems a formal and detached one of introduction at first sight, but it verges closely on recommendation in the broad context of the interaction and positive results it produced. Within a month it helped Hughes’s work draw some attention in the United States.² On receiving the letter Duyckinck wrote William Gilmore Simms about Hughes’s treatise. Simms wrote back on October 15, 1853 that “I shall also be glad to have [the article] of Mr. Hughes, with your recommendation.”³ Hughes reappears in Simms’s letter to Duyckinck of November 24, 1853 as “Professor Hughes” (Simms III 261). When the *Treatise on Sociology, Theoretical and Practical* (hereafter cited as *Treatise*) was published in the fall of 1854, Simms praised it in the *Charleston Mercury* as a work which “fully establishes the claims of Mr. Hughes as one of the most logical and complete reasoners upon the subject [of slavery], of all who have striven in its investigation” (Ambrose 140). Acknowledging Simms as head of the new school of Southern thinkers, Hughes later wrote him, “When we Mississippians want to reason about home matters, we turn towards South Carolina as naturally almost as pagans to an oracle” (Trent 218). Thus Duyckinck reacted to Hawthorne’s introduction of Hughes more swiftly and strongly than this formal letter induces us to suppose and helped publicize Hughes’s ideas in the South.

How did Hughes choose Hawthorne as a counselor in his specialized publication on unfree labor? Hughes’s diary, which “offers our only entry into Hughes’s private life and inner thoughts” (Ambrose 27), does

not afford us a means of inquisition into the question of how he came to contact with Hawthorne, because he stopped writing it after May 1, 1853 or left us no diary which covers the years after he started for Europe. Hawthorne arrived in Liverpool on July 17, 1853, and began consulship on August 1. He never left Liverpool for at least two months after arriving there as consul (Turner 268). Hughes arrived in Le Havre on June 30, 1853 and traveled in France, Belgium, Prussia and Italy. No documentary record of his stop in Great Britain is preserved in his passport still extant.⁴ There is not a remote possibility, then, that the two met each other personally on September 22, 1853 or before. A letter, another possible means of Hughes's attempt to contact Hawthorne, might connect them together. Yet no letters left by Hawthorne and Hughes substantiate the fact that Hughes wrote to Hawthorne, much less an introduction of Hughes made to Hawthorne by some person of their mutual acquaintance.⁵

It is possible that Hughes sought advice from some other people as well as from Hawthorne, but Hughes's diary affords an important clue as to how he came to display a professional interest in Hawthorne. The only work Hughes mentions he read among Hawthorne's works is *The Blithedale Romance*, published on July 14, 1852, and a title which appears in a list of the works he left us after reading. It is to be noted that on November 21, 1852 he wrote down his reading *The Blithedale Romance* in his diary, whose printing in 1852 totaled 7,442 copies, while *Life of Franklin Pierce* had been published on August 31, 1852 and reprinted in September and October, aggregating 12,952 copies, of which 5,000 copies were bought by the Democratic Committee at a discount (Clark 212-13, 222). Hughes was something of a democrat at that time due to the influence of his brother-in-law William T. Magruder, but he picked *The Blithedale Romance* rather than the campaign biography which had caused a considerable stir among Northerners including Hawthorne's friends.

We can easily surmise the reason why Hughes thought the romance more important to him. From late February until early June, 1852, he had been greedily and sympathetically reading Charles Fourier's *Passions of the Human Soul* with the purpose in mind of solving "the Social problem": "Continued Fourier on the Passions. I do not think that this book will mislead, nor make me visionary. It will generate conceptions; it will supply elements. These I can combine; can accept or reject" (Ambrose 61-62). Ambrose demonstrates convincingly on substantial evidence that the germ of Hughes's sociology can be traced to John Locke, Immanuel Kant, Francis Bacon, Thomas Carlyle and Fourier, and implies that Fourier's ideas of social reorganization "stimulated Hughes to devote most of his adult life to questions about social organization and social relations," but that "Hughes was not altogether comfortable with the degree of influence Fourier seemed to have on him" (61).

There is no comment or criticism left on the nature of *The Blithedale Romance* in Hughes's list of reading,⁶ yet in view of Hughes's uncomfortable feeling that something is wrong with Fourier, it is well worth pointing out that *The Blithedale Romance* is an important contribution to Fourierism criticism. Fourier attacked the evils of civilization, such as the cheats of commercial arrangements and the boredom of family life, and suggested that the true salvation of man is the complete release of the passions (Bell 93). In the preface of *The Blithedale Romance* Hawthorne clearly denies putting forward "the slightest pretensions to illustrate a theory, or elicit a conclusion, favorable or otherwise, in respect to Socialism" (CE III 1), but the social system built on the primacy of Fourier's twelve passions results in the tragedy of the self-concentrated Philanthropist, the high-spirited Woman, the weakly Maiden, and the Minor Poet: "The experiment, so far as its original projectors were concerned, proved long ago a failure, first lapsing into Fourierism, and dying, as it well deserved, for this infidelity to its own higher spirit" (CE III 246).

In July and August, 1852 Hughes almost exclusively read materials concerning slavery and the sectional struggle, such as John Fletcher's *Studies on Slavery* and John C. Calhoun's *Disquisition on Government* (Ambrose 68), but it should not be left unnoticed that the influence of Fourier on Hughes along with that of Carlyle, says Ambrose, led him to some contemporary political topics. Thus Hughes's attention to Hawthorne comes mainly from his keen interest in Fourier. It is left open whether Hawthorne obtained the essence of warranteeism condensed into some paragraphs in Hughes's potential letter to him, yet it is profoundly understandable that Hughes stated the nature of his work to Hawthorne, setting forth the merits of his view of social progress, since the fact that Hawthorne assigned Hughes to the charge of Duyckinck suggests that Hawthorne understood it in the very terms and ideas Hughes came up with in the *Treatise*.

A 24 year old novice lawyer in Mississippi, Hughes had gained no fame as an author or political activist even at home when these undisclosed circumstances brought Hawthorne into touch with him. This helps establish a working hypothesis that Hughes wrote to Hawthorne a letter somewhat heavily loaded with his social ideas supporting warranteeism. Hawthorne's letter of September 22, 1853 to Duyckinck, kept in "MS. Duyckinck Family Papers, MSS Division" in New York Public Library, has a note "probably by a clerk of Duyckinck's" (CE XVII 611): "Treatise on Simple Labor / Mr. Hughes of Missi—/ Comes in Clairborne to Louisiana / Thos J Durant former US District atty / T W [Oleary?]" (CE XVII 611). This note is the first and the last one written on all the manuscripts of letters Duyckinck received from Hawthorne. In the *Treatise* Hughes classifies producers into capitalists, skilled-laborers and simple-laborers, and describes "the best system for producing a simple-labor class" (*Treatise* 86-87). In 1829 Hughes had been born in Port Gibson in Clairborne County and by January, 1848, he had read law under Thomas Jefferson Durant, United States district attorney for Louisiana (Ambrose 24). He was also greatly influenced by Durant in the study of social organization. Since he was quite unknown even in the South before the publication of the *Treatise*, there is every probability of his presenting these pieces of personal information to Duyckinck. The 1968 reprint of the 1854 edition of the *Treatise* does not contain Hughes's personal history at all. Thus Duyckinck probably received an article and a personal history of Hughes either in the same mail with Hawthorne's letter or under separate cover from Hughes himself.

Hawthorne's letter to Duyckinck poses two important questions: why did Hawthorne put Hughes under the charge of Duyckinck and how did Hughes publish his work with Lippincott, Grambo & Co. shortly after he returned from Europe before the fall of 1854? William D. Ticknor, who had sailed to Liverpool with the Hawthornes and attended publishing matters in London, spent four days with Hawthorne just before embarking for America on October 1, 1853. He might have been a more effective option to Hawthorne as a means of entering into communication with American publishers about Hughes, because James T. Fields, Ticknor's junior partner, had formed a literary relationship with Simms. Simms, for example, wrote Fields on July 25, 1853 to see him at Putnam's in New York or at Lippincott in Philadelphia. Furthermore, Simms recommended to Fields on August 16, 1853 Paul H. Hayne, poet of South Carolina, whose uncle, Robert Y. Hayne, writes Simms, is "well known to you, as honored by his antagonism with Webster" (Simms VI 141) in "the celebrated debate, which among other subjects dealt with the tariff, Negro slavery, the merits of South Carolina and Massachusetts in the Revolution" (Simms VI 141n.), and yet Ticknor and Fields published Hayne's Poems because of their literary merits in November 1854.

Ticknor, Reed & Fields had published Hawthorne's *Life of Franklin Pierce* and Ticknor endeavored to publicize the book nationwide. However, he published the biography because, as he puts it, "we cannot of course consent to have any work written by Hawthorne, issued by any other than our house" (CE XXIII 634n.). Ticknor was "a bitter whig" (CE XVI 547), and "at bottom a bookseller" distinguished by Hawthorne from Fields, "a man in whom the publisher and author meet, and in whom both classes can understand each other" (CE XVI 550). Fields himself, as poet, critic and book promoter at his own risk, would not have accepted the publication of Hughes's work which advocated the Southern vision of order, because he was sensitive to the antislavery feelings of the Northern readers.

In the Liverpool Consulate where for "a man with a natural tendency to meddle with other people's business, there could not possibly be a more congenial sphere," Hawthorne always hated to give advice "especially when there is a prospect of its being taken", because "When a man opens both his eyes," he writes in *Our Old Home*, "he generally sees about as many reasons for acting in any one way as in any other, and quite as many for acting in neither" (CE V 30). However, he provided conscientious care when he introduced literary or non-literary men to American papers or publishers. He "particularize[d] such American papers or personages as it would be desirable to send copies to" and sent copies "to a friend who will distribute them in the best manner for the author's fame" (CE XVII 359) when William Allingham asked him to send copies of his poems to some influential papers and men in America. As I mentioned above at the beginning of the paper, Hawthorne wrote only three letters to Duyckinck while staying as consul in Great Britain. The remaining two letters introduced a painter or a writer who had "a world-wide claim to a friendly reception, as the son of the late celebrated artist" (CE XVII 544), or a poet or a scholar who is "a gentleman personally

unknown" (CE XVII 367) but worthy of being recommended to Duyckinck, because Duyckinck was "a person of leisure, who interests himself in all matters of art and literature" (CE XVII 367). The phrase "a person of leisure," despite its jocosity, is indissolubly connected with the disciplines of the *Literary World*, declared in the October 7, 1848 issue, that the role of the press lies in "all matters which arise naturally in connection with Literature, Science, and Art" (Bohde 46): that is, as Bohde puts it, "diverse manifestations of culture—books, plays, concerts, art exhibits, lectures, other magazines," or, "the manners and habits of the times" (46).

Hawthorne deliberately entrusted Hughes to Duyckinck, a whig and yet a political conservative who stated in the January 19, 1850 issue of the *Literary World* that "The revolutionary spirit is a spirit of negatives; it destroys, but does not build" (Bohde 185-186). Trained in law at Columbia College, Duyckinck once wrote that "the public is 'indebted' to the bar, for 'its peace and good order'" (Bohde 47). He argued in his criticisms of Hawthorne's works against "the subtle metaphysical analysis of morbid temperaments, in which his pen has had somewhat too limited and painful a range" (Crowley 276), indeed, but his review of *Life of Franklin Pierce* defended Hawthorne from slashing personal attacks, saying that it was "a healthy encounter with living interests" (Crowley 276). Hawthorne had the *Literary World* sent by Duyckinck, which suggests Hawthorne did not doubt Duyckinck's knowledge of the publisher of proslavery thoughts. The *Literary World* even comments on Simms's *Maria de Berniere* as one of its "good books": "Nowhere else may we find so good a picture of life in New Orleans as in Marie de Berniere—its author has seen and appreciated everything. It is novel too: for society there is not as we cold Northerners can comprehend it without long familiarity, and even then we rarely possess the open-sesame to knowledge of life, sympathy" (441). The same issue also advertises the said firm's reissuance of Simms's *The Wigwam and the Cabin* and *The Sword and the Distaff*, and they continue to be advertised in all the issues of the *Literary World* from May 28 to July 9, 1853. Among Hawthorne's acquaintances Duyckinck was the one and only non-Southern literary man of "the best talent" who held "it to be quite within the range of the ordinary duties of a man of letters to write. . . the interests of the country" (Crowley 274) and who could "distribute [the *Treatise*] in the best manner of the author's fame."

As books printed in the South were not "read even in adjoining Southern states" (Hubbell 363), it was essential for writers to publish a work in New York, Philadelphia, Boston or London to attract much attention in the North and/or the South. Lippincott, Grambo & Co. was one of the emerging publishing companies in the United States. "Literary Intelligence" in the January 29, 1853 issue of the *Literary World* presents it, among others, as a firm whose movements "have lately exerted the greatest influence in securing to Philadelphia its honors as a publishing and book-selling city" (92). It cites from *Godey's Magazine*: "To enumerate their various publications would require a volume; they embrace all subjects—scientific, historical, scholastic, &c. &c. Over one hundred books have been issued by them during 1852. . . . In the semi-annual 'trade sales,' or sale of books by auction to booksellers only, which takes place in New York, Philadelphia, and Boston, Messrs. Lippincott, Grambo, & Co. are one of the largest depositors and purchasers; and their enterprise and capital furnish employment to over five hundred workmen in their own, and other establishments employed by them" (92). The May 28, 1853 issue of the *Literary World* mentions in "Correspondence" this publishing firm which "issue their usual goodly number of good books" (441) ranging from "Text Book and Atlas of the Geography of the Bible" through "The History of Massachusetts from its earliest settlement to the present time" to "Anti-Fanaticism; a Tale of the South" (441).

More important and interesting, this publisher in Philadelphia reissued *The Pro-Slavery Argument as Maintained by the Most Distinguished Writers of the Southern States*, which contains Thomas Roderick Dew's "Abolition of Negro Slavery," William Harper's "Memoir on Slavery," Simms's "The Morals of Slavery," etc. *The Pro-slavery Argument*, along with *Norman Maurice*, is advertised in the *Literary World* consecutively from the May 28 issue to that of September 3, 1853. The September 17, 1853 issue announces the publication by the firm of Edward Josiah Stearns's *Notes on Uncle Tom's Cabin; Being a Logical Answer to Its Allegations and Inferences Against Slavery as an Institution*. Many more radical proslavery tracts were to be published by the same firm like Josiah Clark Nott's *Types of Mankind, or, Ethnological Researches* (published in 1854, but advertised in the *Literary World* as early as November 26, 1853) and *Indigenous Races of the Earth; or, New Chapters of Ethnological Inquiry* (1857). Then Hawthorne could have known that Lippincott,

Grambo & Co. was in a condition to publish proslavery tracts and that Duyckinck kept in touch with the firm. In addition, New York and Philadelphia were more important literary centers than Boston "before the founding of the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1857" (Charvat 170). Thus when he wrote Duyckinck, Hawthorne somewhat involved himself with the publication of the uniquely Southern social theory of unfree labor called warranteeism.

By warranteeism Hughes addressed the social dilemmas in "a far more iconoclastic and dangerous form than most of slavery's apologists dared" (Faust 241). When the *Treatise* appeared in 1854, its sociological terms and ideas like those of Auguste Comte mixed with antebellum moral philosophy confused many contemporary Southerners so deeply as for a reviewer to say that Hughes needed "an interpreter" (Ambrose 140). Rather than the nature and role of the state and the theory of unfree labor Southerners stressed "Hughes's unflinching defense of unfree labor as evidence of the increasingly uncompromising position of southern proslavery thought" (Ambrose 142-43). Even in the rise of Marxist reconsideration of Southern slavery in the first half of the twentieth century his theory was likened to a vision of "Russian bolshevism" and "Prussianization and fascism" (Lyman xvii-xviii). It is not until recently that his theory came to be considered as "an effort to construct a coherent southern social philosophy" (Faust 1).

With all the new efforts and conclusive evidence, the exact period of the writing of the *Treatise* has not yet been identified by any evidence that throws light on it. Hughes's first biographer William D. Moore states that Hughes prepared himself for it before leaving college, but Ambrose questions its accuracy because Hughes never mentions it in his diary. Its appearance soon after he returned from the Grand Tour, says Ambrose, induces us to fix the date of its composition before the tour. Hawthorne's letter to Duyckinck, for the first time in the critical history of Hughes's life, offers definite support for the fact that Hughes was prepared to publish his first work earlier than September 22, 1853. Hughes was ready to give expression to his thought in a very lucid way when he contacted Hawthorne about the publication of his work.

The *Treatise*, which "introduced [the term sociology] into the American lexicon of social science" (Lyman ix), expounds in Book I the philosophy that "no society is in both essentials and accidentals, good totally or totally bad" (*Treatise* 50), and that "[t]he existence and progress of all, is the realization of a perfect society" (*Treatise* 49). Order, says Hughes, is societary wisdom essential and "that far, always right" (*Treatise* 52), and "[p]rogress modifies; it never abolishes" (*Treatise* 71), since "[t]otal destruction is destruction of both bad and good" (*Treatise* 71). This basic idea underlying his thesis must have interested Hawthorne more deeply than Hawthorne scholars are willing to admit.

Book I deals with "Theoretical Sociology," in which Hughes stresses strongly that an imperfect society realizes "either, (1), the existence of some and the progress of some; or, (2), the existence of all, and the progress of some" (*Treatise* 49). "All artificials not perfect, ought to progress" (*Treatise* 70), but progress must be orderly. Order only enables the realization of "the development of the good and the envelopment of the evil" (*Treatise* 50), since the essence of power is orderliness and "[a]narchy is impotence" (*Treatise* 51). Adaptation (the making of a rule of action), association (subjection to the rule), and regulation (the actualization of the rule) are the crucial ingredients of power of order to control the springs of human action, i. e. "desire and fear" (*Treatise* 55). Liberty and order are not incongruous with each other: "Orderly freedom is liberty; disorderly, license" (*Treatise* 52), because "Freedom chooses" (*Treatise* 52). Despite his use of the Comtean division of society into seven systems (Ambrose 77), his preference for order over anarchy as well as his realization that "All artificials [are] not perfect" can be traced to the proslavery thought in the 1830s, propounded by Thomas Roderick Dew and William Harper.

Book II propounds "Practical Sociology," which contrasts the two forms of practical society whose economic systems differ in their means of association, adaptation, and regulation. One system "warrants to simple-laborers, themselves and their families, during ability and disability, a comfortable sufficiency of necessities for health and strength," while in the other economic system "subsistence is not warranted," and "disorder is natural" (*Treatise* 82). Hughes says that the warranted economic system of the United States South is not slavery but warranteeism where "[t]he subsistence of all, is the organic end of the economic system" (*Treatise* 81). In the free-labor system "the implements of association, are the desire of bettered condition, and the fear of want or worse condition" (*Treatise* 90), and it does not realize systematic adaptation

of labor and capital, whereas the warrantee system realizes systematic quantitative adaptation because it “capitalizes labor-obligations” (*Treatise* 106) for the existence and progress of all. The laborer and capitalist belong to the same family, he says, and they have a home-association. The idea of subsistence of all runs through Book III highlighting syntagonism of “the interests of the capitalist and the laborer, in both the bodily and the local production of the laborer” (*Treatise* 164) in the warrantee system.

In Book IV Hughes looks into the system of free labor and points out that since the economic system of the free labor organization is private, it cannot actualize the subsistence of all: the system of free labor must “therefore progress into a system of liberty-labor” where “the method of systematic quantitative adaptation of laborers to capital, or of subsistees to subsistence; the method of systematic justico-distribution must be actualized; and by these methods each progressive, a comfortable sufficiency of necessities for health and strength, warranted to all” (*Treatise* 187). The free-labor system must be “municipalized or publicly incorporated” (*Treatise* 196), and “[t]he adapter and regulator, must be the State” (*Treatise* 196): “the relation of capital to labor, ought to be public” (*Treatise* 197).

In Book V, which accounts for one third of the *Treatise*, he insists that warranteeism of the societary organization of the United States South is “an organization both necessary and progressive” (*Treatise* 207). Although the societary organization of the United States South is “warranteeism, with the ethnical qualification,” it is “accidental”: “Warranteeism without the ethnical qualification, is that to which every society of one race, must progress” (*Treatise* 207). Warranteeism is “a public obligation of warrantor and warrantee to labor for the benefit of, (1) the State, (2), the Warrantee, and, (3), the Warrantor” (*Treatise* 208), but in the warrantee commonwealths of the United States South, where two races “differ from each other in beauty; in color; in the inclination, shape, and direction of the pile; in the conformation of their body, and in other physiological respects” (*Treatise* 239), it is “the historical fact” that “the white race is now and has been sovereign; the black, subsovereign” (*Treatise* 239). He goes on to say “the black and white race must not be co-sovereign” (*Treatise* 240) because to forbid ethnical amalgamation is “a moral duty” (*Treatise* 239). Notwithstanding these ethnical qualifications, says Hughes, “justice and expediency are actualized” (*Treatise* 288) in the warrantee system.

Hughes’s idea of social reform and his discussion of free labor vs. warranteeism come from the southern social philosophy originating early in the 1830s, whereas the way Hughes advocates warranteeism reveals a seemingly subdued yet racism-conscious sense of history. He develops a sophisticated vision of social order which represents “the southern-conservative critique of modern gnosticism” (Genovese, *Southern Tradition* xi), but it cannot “fully displace the appeal of proslavery paternalism that remained grounded in the actual social relations of the slave South” (Ambrose 138). On April 13, 1851 he wrote in his diary that “The relation of landlord & tenant is as sinful as that [of] master and slave. Both relations shall be abolished; but not to the hurt of the South” (Lyman 43). If Hawthorne had possessed an extensive knowledge of Southern proslavery thought, he would have found in Hughes’s ideas a mixture of the anti-bourgeoisie ideology of George Fitzhugh, who supported white as well as black slavery, and the political and social conviction of James H. Hammond, who wrote Simms, “As an individual, I would far prefer tenants to slaves. But that system is wholly impracticable now and abolition would be simply to *ruin* all things” (Hubbell 411).

Many speculations should not be hazarded as to how much knowledge of Hughes’s arguments Hawthorne got, because Simms’s response to Hughes’s recommendation by Duyckinck and Simms’s acclaim of the *Treatise* demonstrate that Hughes defended Southern slavery founded on the principles of warranteeism. The work was carried too far from Hawthorne’s scope of understanding of, and beyond his deep-seated ambivalence towards, Southern slavery and American politics. An understanding of the fact, however, that he placed Hughes in the charge of Duyckinck instead of Ticknor and that he did not dismiss Hughes’s wish for advice from his mind is important to fully appreciate that in his rudimentary grasp of American history he saw the need for social dynamics of controversy and the South or the Southern proslavery thought reinforced his logic of heterogeneity.

Hawthorne found the states “too various and too extended to form really one country” (CE XVIII 8). He mentions rather ironically in *The House of the Seven Gables* that “the descendants of a Pyncheon who had emigrated to Virginia, in some past generation, and become a great planter there—hearing of Hepzibah’s

destitution. . . would send her a remittance of a thousand dollars” with “the splendid generosity of character, with which their Virginian mixture must have enriched the New England blood” (CE II 65). The aristocratic Southern planter (Virginian descendant of the Cavaliers), says Hawthorne in “A Book of Autograph,” stays aloof from “the New-Englander with his hereditary Puritanism,” or “the self-made man from Massachusetts or Connecticut” (CE XI 360). Massachusetts struggled with South Carolina, according to the narrator in *Grandfather’s Chair*, for the chair which “like the wooden Palladium of Troy, was connected with the country’s fate” (CE VI 136). The rivalry and heterogeneity among “the sisterhood of states” extended into the slavery question which resulted in a clash of the Northern and Southern visions of social order. Thus the South represented everything alien to New England and acted as a counterbalance to the North in Hawthorne’s universe of discourse.

Hawthorne was “rather more of an abolitionist in feeling than in principle” (CE VIII 112), and recorded “a queer impression” (CE VIII 151) when he heard a young man from “Quisconsin” say that he wished to own a thousand slaves in Alabama. He had an ambivalent attitude toward the Colonization of Liberia and “could therefore mark its onward or retreating footsteps, and the better judge what was permanent, and what merely temporary or accidental” (CE XXIII 268). The Fugitive Law of 1851 disquieted him into “any respectable degree of warmth,” while he hesitated to decide “if it really be the great subject—a point which another age can determine better than ours” (CE XVI 431).

Hawthorne never avoided serious involvement with “the continual fuss, and tumult and excitement, and bad blood, which we keep about political topics” (CE XVII 188). While staying in England, where it was “so agreeable to find one’s self relieved from the tyranny of public opinion” (CE XVII 250), he repeatedly asked Ticknor to send Boston papers and received “hundreds of newspapers—whig, democrat, free soil and all kinds, from Washington, New York, Boston and Salem” (CE XVII 238). He sent down Whig and Abolition papers to John L. O’Sullivan in Lisbon.

Yet even when he felt “quite homeless and astray” in England, he found America “very disagreeable and uncomfortable, morally, socially, and climatically” (CE XVII 406). Hawthorne confessed to Bridge on January 15, 1857 that “I sympathize to a large extent with the Northern feeling” (CE XVIII 8), but remained doubtful about Abolitionists who “look at matters with an awful squint” (CE XVIII 89). Only after the secession of the southern states from the Union seemed impending and unavoidable did he rule the Union as “unnatural” (CE XVIII 355), and “amputation as much the better plan” (CE XVIII 412).

The fact that Hawthorne viewed the North as “the counterbalance of our Southern States” (CE XVIII 355) until the last moment is demonstrated by Hawthorne’s two letters. One is his letter to Zachariah Burchmore of July 15, 1851, in which he dared to write that “I have not. . . the slightest sympathy for the slaves; or, at least, not half so much as for the laboring whites, who, I believe, as a general thing, are ten times worse off than the Southern negroes” (CE XVI 456). The other is his letter to Charles Sumner of May 23, 1855, which claims that “no slave-drivers are so wicked as [shipping-masters in the American ports], and there is nothing in slavery so bad as the system with which they are connected” (CE XVII 345).

There is a clear though slight difference of tone and expression about the contrast between the North and the South in these two letters. In the former letter Hawthorne consciously contrasts the “laboring whites” with “the Southern slaves.” He believes a free laborer is “as a general thing, ten times worse off” than an unfree laborer. Particularization finds its way to generalization and vice versa here. All he has to do in his letter to Sumner, on the other hand, is to make a protestation of the “wrong system” (CE XVII 344), attending to which causes “much good. . . and no harm” (CE XVII 345). “[H]aving been thrust by Providence (and Pierce) into this consulate” (CE XVII 344), he adduces slavery and slave-drivers for the sake of contrast with the cruel and inhuman treatment given to a free white man, yet slavery is here divested by him of any specifics. There is a tinge of irony and sarcasm in his description of the free white citizen as a farmer “who had been absolutely kidnapped by a shipping-master at Charleston” (CE XVII 344), a city symbolic of the Southern slavery. The irony and sarcasm are exercised on Sumner to a remarkable degree, but we are led to find they are also transferred to the South when Hawthorne says in *The English Notebooks* that this Charlestonian was “a small farmer in the interior of South Carolina, sending butter, eggs, and poultry to be sold in Charleston by his brother” (CE XXI 169). The South is divested of the particularities of its maturing slave society in this

correspondence and journal. Hawthorne adds that “I only see what is bad, and do not pretend to any faculty of suggesting what may be better” (CE XVII 345). Being human means here “apt to become devilish, under evil influences” (CE XVII 346).

This is not to say that Southern smallholders or yeomen did not accept the legitimacy of slaveholding. As Eugene Genovese and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese put it, “the South did constitute a ‘slaveholders’ republic’ in which republican political practice depended heavily upon its roots in slavery as a social system” (7-8). However, it would miss the whole point if we understood that Hawthorne mentions in his letter and *The English Notebooks* the free white who happened to be a Charlestonian. In the historical context of his letter to the single-minded champion of antislavery, the citizen being a free white “absolutely kidnapped by a shipping-master at Charleston, carried to a foreign country, treated with savage cruelty during the voyage, and left to die on his arrival” (CE XXI 169) cannot be understood to insinuate other than white slavery. The wrong system in the North, a transposition of the middle passage, is juxtaposed with the terms “slave-drivers” and “slavery” associated with the South, but “white slavery,” a contradiction of terms, was advocated militantly by Fitzhugh and hinted at to some degree by Hughes. In this sense it is important to see that slavery only appears in the abstract in the latter letter. The fact that Hawthorne considers slavery in the abstract bears evidence that he had transferred his attentions to the Southern proslavery thought in the 1850s when he wrote Sumner. Hughes’s contact with Hawthorne occurred in September 1853, approximately at the midpoint between these two letters.

When the abolition question became more intense in the 1850s, proslavery thought activists began to transfer their points of argument to the comparative merits of slave labor against free labor to demonstrate the justice of the institution of slavery. Hughes’s *Treatise* was one of those tracts which stressed why slavery was essential and right. He later advocated reopening the African slave trade and the introduction of Chinese laborers into the South. Proslavery activists’s concern with slavery’s defense eluded Hawthorne’s sympathetic understanding and undermined his strategy of logic of heterogeneity. When Hawthorne wrote Bridge on October 12, 1861 that “I would fight to the death for the Northern slave-states” (CE XVIII 412), it meant that the Southern proslavery thought had gone too far for Hawthorne to counterbalance the Northern antislavery thought with. “Chiefly About War Matters,” published in the July 1862 *Atlantic*, uses the satirical interplay between the questioning tone of the text and the explanatory notes of an imaginary censor to oppose the Northern moral vision of the Civil War. Southern slavery is connected by Hawthorne with the North: “[these Africans of Virginia] are our brethren, as being lineal descendants from the May Flower, the fated womb of which, in her first voyage, sent forth a brood of Pilgrims upon Plymouth Rock, and, in a subsequent one, spawned Slaves upon the southern soil” (CE XXIII 420). As for the South, he writes that a Virginian village has “the natural shabbiness, and decayed, unthrifty look” (CE XXIII 426). “[T]he many dynasties in which the Southern character has been predominant” and “the genial courtesy, the warm and graceful freedom of that region” are held by the residents and visitors of Washington who are “traitors” (CE XXIII 441). The South, which had struggled with the North for “the wooden Palladium of Troy,” dissolved out in Hawthorne’s universe of discourse.

Notes

- 1 Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Centenary Edition of the Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne* (Eds. William Charvat, Roy Harvey Pearce, and Claude M. Simpson. Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1962-. 23 vols. to date), vol. XVI, 700. References to Hawthorne’s works are to this edition, abbreviated as CE and cited in the text by volume and page number.
- 2 While consul in Liverpool, Hawthorne sent personal letters to Boston and New York in the U. S. despatch bag, which were posted by the U. S. despatch agent on arrival. As Duyckinck did not write the date he received Hawthorne’s letter, it is difficult to know exactly how many days it took Hawthorne’s letter to reach Duyckinck, but we can safely say that it took about two weeks. Hawthorne’s letter of May 5, 1854, for example, has a postmark of New York, May 19 (CE XVII 618), and Hawthorne received Bridge’s letter from Washington of April 18 in Liverpool on May 1 (CE XVII 212). A three-week period from September 22 to October 15 makes it possible for Duyckinck to receive Hawthorne’s letter from Liverpool and write Simms about Hughes’s *Treatise*.
- 3 William Gilmore Simms, *The Letters of William Gilmore Simms* (Eds. Mary C. Simms Oliphant and T. C. Duncan Eaves.

Columbus: U of South Carolina P, vols. I-V, 1952-56, vol. VI, 1982), vol. III, 256. References to Simms's letters are to this edition, abbreviated as Simms and cited in the text by volume and page number. Simms's letter to Duyckinck of October 15, 1853 begins: "Thanks for your letter. The article on Brodhead will be acceptable. I shall also be glad to have that of Mr. Hughes, with your recommendation" (Simms III 256). Just after these words Simms mentions that the *North American Review* critique "does *not* satisfy us. It contains sundry mistakes. Remember, *ab ovo*., we deny that slavery is an evil, or that any wrong is done to the negro. We deny also that Law, with us, sanctions any brutality. But of this hereafter. All the points made by Mr. Hughes have been already made (If I may judge from your report of his argt.) by the writers of the South" (Simms III 257). Simms seems to have had hard feelings against the *North American Review*, which "from the first associated with Harvard College" (Mott 207), had taunted Simms for his pretensions and literary nationalism. Duyckinck says in the October 15, 1853 issue of the *Literary World* that "Uncle Tom," "entitled 'Possible Amelioration of Slavery,' accepts Southern Slavery in fact and necessity, in letter and spirit, in a manner which will satisfy the Calhoun logic of the most ardent South Carolinian" and "looks entirely to the regulation of the evil by a just and merciful slave code, to be originated at the South" (182). We do not have any means to know how Duyckinck had written Simms about Hughes and the *North American Review* critique, but the editors of *The Letters of William Gilmore Simms* are right in insisting that Simms seems to have confused Duyckinck's mention of Hughes and the *North American Review* critique (Simms III 256n.). One of the reasons we can present is that the *Treatise* was the first work Hughes published. No Hughes scholars, Lyman and Ambrose included, attribute the article "The Possible Amelioration of Slavery" to Hughes. Frank Luther Mott assigns it to Sidney George Fisher (Simms III 257n.). Another is that Simms ought to have found out his mistake later, because he continued to ask Duyckinck for his review of "Professor Hughes" (Simms III 261) on November 24, 1853, and "our brother Southron" (Simms III 270) on December 27, 1853. If Simms had stayed convinced that Hughes was the author of the *North American Review* critique, he would not have requested a review from Duyckinck so persistently. Except for "the vols. for the last 6 mos of 1852 & the first six months of 1853" (Simms III 260), Simms got the other numbers of the *Literary World* sent by Duyckinck though "very irregularly by mail" (Simms III 260), so he should have surely recognized that the article of the *North American Review* which Duyckinck remarked in the October 15, 1853 issue of the *Literary World* was not written by Hughes. "Mr. Hughes" in the beginning part of his letter to Duyckinck of October 15, 1853 should be distinguished from "Mr. Hughes" whom Simms supposed to be the author of the article.

- 4 I am indebted to Dr. Douglas Ambrose for valuable information he gave me personally on Hughes's passport.
- 5 The Henry Hughes collection at Mississippi Department of Archives and History contains Hughes's diary, a scrapbook and a few later letters, but it does not hold Hughes's correspondence to Hawthorne. To date no one has discovered Hughes's early correspondence. I owe an acknowledgement to the Archives and Library Division of Mississippi Department of Archives and History for the source material and information concerning Hughes.
- 6 Hawthorne appears only once in Hughes's diary, which reads: 'New Orleans La. Nov 21st 1852. Read Hawthorne's "Blithedale Romance." Continued Cousin's "Hist. of Philosophy"...' (Original in Hughes's Diary, Henry Hughes Collection at Mississippi Department of Archives and History). Victor Cousin's *Course of History of Modern Philosophy* owed much to Auguste Comte, who had introduced the term "sociologie" in the fourth volume of his *Cours de philosophie positive*, published in 1839 (Lyman 16-17).
- 7 For Duyckinck's excitement at the French Revolution of 1848 and his "gentlemanly distance from what he called the mob," see Larry J. Reynolds, *European Revolutions and the American Literary Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1988), 10-12.

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