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# Rebecca as a Critic of Chivalry: Scott's Poetics of Fiction in *Ivanhoe*

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## Introduction

Walter Scott, in his letter to Wordsworth, confessed that in writing, he should "expel[...] from [his] brain the Fiend of Chivalry and [send] him to wander at will through the world" of his fiction.<sup>1</sup> We will wonder why he described his passion for writing as "a Fiend". Scott's famous novel *Ivanhoe*, in 1819, is important to understand his ideas of fiction because it is set in medieval England. Yet, the critics tend to undervalue this novel as a typical chivalric tale. For example, Jane Millgate points out the "patterned simplicities of its highly stylized narrative procedures" (191). However, by reading *Ivanhoe* carefully, we can find Scott succeeds in showing his originality, especially in its structure. It is characterized by its detailed description of characters' internal conflicts and different from the conventional romances.

The biggest problem of this novel is the hero's infirmity in the middle part. After fighting in the tournament, the hero Ivanhoe becomes seriously injured and remains immobile until the late chapters. Many times he is "rescued" by another knight, King Richard. Taking place of the injured hero, the Jewess Rebecca plays an important part in the narrative course. She becomes a protagonist in the later scene, for she takes care of Ivanhoe and endures many persecutions as a Jewess. Harry E. Shaw points out her pivotal role: "His [Ivanhoe's] most effective moments are spent as a foil for Rebecca, whose status as a Jew sets her apart

from the dominant culture, making her the believable foil for it" (209). This structure enables Rebecca to make a judgment toward the Christian culture, including chivalry, as an outsider. In most of the scenes, Rebecca has the central position. Therefore, it is inevitable that the center of our interest shifts from *Ivanhoe* to Rebecca.

To understand her significance, we should look at Rebecca's final visit to *Ivanhoe*'s wife, Rowena. *Ivanhoe* finally gets married with his fiancée Rowena. After blessing their marriage, she asks Rowena to remove the bridal veil and to show her naked face. After seeing her face, Rebecca says, "There reigns in it [the countenance] gentleness and goodness; if a tinge of world's pride or vanities may mix with an expression so lovely, how should we chide [it]?" (500).<sup>2</sup> Here, we should pay attention to the fact that she plays a role to tell the fortune of this marriage. We should interpret that Jewess accepts Rowena as *Ivanhoe*'s good wife by the phrase "gentleness and goodness", though she sharply points out "a tinge of world's pride or vanities". The Jewess not only praises the virtue, but also finds the faults. Indeed, Rebecca's removing the bridal veil is to cast a light on Rowena's true characteristics.

Like this case, Rebecca, as an outsider, evaluates the other characters. In this thesis, I'd like to consider Rebecca as a critic especially toward two knights—the hero *Ivanhoe* and his antagonist Guilbert. From a Jewish point of view, she criticizes the brutality of chivalry in this novel. In relationship with the knights, she can even correct their faults. Then I'll first consider how Scott describes Rebecca's identity as a Jewess first and then examine her important roles in her discourse with the knights.

## I. Unveiling the Suppressed Self

*Ivanhoe* deals with the racial tensions in medieval England.

The conflicts mainly occur between the Saxons and the Normans, but we must also pay attention to the presence of the Jews — Rebecca and her father Isaac. In *From Shylock to Svengali*, Edgar Rosenberg says, that in *Ivanhoe* "[s]ince they [Jews] are mercy of all comers, Saxons and Normans alike, they emerge for the very reason as a kind of critical norms, the yardstick by which Scott can measure the abnormities and abnormalities of their oppressors" (89). I partly agree to his opinion, for Isaac is a powerless victim of the abnormalities of his oppressors. However, his daughter Rebecca has more power to find out the structure itself which creates the abnormalities. We can say she reveals the suppression of their true self in the institution. I'll begin this discussion with Rebecca's use of the veil. By the veil, she can show her characteristics most, concealing and revealing her suppressed feelings.<sup>3</sup>

Rebecca has really complex characteristics. She loves the Christian knight Ivanhoe from the bottom of her heart, but it's also a treacherous thing to show her love to a Gentile in her religion. The Jewess Rebecca is forbidden to show her love directly to the Christian hero in the religious duty. When she first takes care of wounded Ivanhoe, he awakes and asks her name. When Rebecca mentions that she is a Jewess, his "respectful admiration" at once becomes "a manner cold composed and collected", for his racial prejudice. Though expecting it, she feels a little disappointed, for she wishes to be praised for her beauty. The author Scott says, "[T]he fair daughter of Isaac was not without a touch of female weakness" (299). With this "weakness", she is not "an angel" but a sympathetic female figure.

To cope with her conflict between love and duty, she uses the lady's item "veil" effectively. For example, seeing the hero sleeping, Rebecca says, "[O]h my father! evil is it with his daughter, when his gray hairs are not remembered because of the golden

locks of youth [Ivanhoe]! [...] But I will tear this folly from my heart though every fibre bleed as I rend it away" and "[wraps] her closely in her veil" (318). Here, the veil has a symbolic meaning in that it conceals not only her face, but also her feelings. It is also a physical expression of her feelings by the image of "every fiber's bleeding". By her veil, Rebecca keeps her sense of balance between the Jewish rule and her personal feelings.

However, the usage of the veil is not only to conceal her feelings. When she removes her veil, her countenance can convey great burden of emotions. Later in the novel, she is suspected as a witch and judged by the Order of the Temple. The Templars command Rebecca to remove the veil. Scott describes the following scene thus: "She [Rebecca] withdrew her veil, and looked on them with a countenance in which bashfulness contended with dignity. Her exceeding beauty excited a murmur of surprise" (411). We can know her beauty and dignity are really appealed even to her oppressors in this scene. In a word, her dignity creates dramatic moments. She not only impresses enemies, but also reveals knights' suppressed feelings through the conversation. Rebecca can find out that the institution of chivalry suppresses their feelings and deprives them of their kindness. I believe that this is what Scott intends by creating Rebecca.

In later scene, Rebecca has an opportunity to discuss the value of chivalry with Ivanhoe and Guilbert. We can find the similarity in the scenes in which she discusses the law of chivalry. First, we should see the controversy between Rebecca and Ivanhoe in chapter 28.

[Ivanhoe said,] "The love of battle is the food upon which we live. . . . We live not—we wish not live longer than while we are victorious and renowned—Such, maiden, are

the laws of chivalry to which we are sworn. . . ."

"Alas!" said the fair Jewess, ". . . What remains to you as the prize of all the blood you have spilled [...] when death hath broken the strong man's spear and overtaken the speed of his war-horse?" (315-316)

Here Rebecca sharply points out the brutality under the name of "laws of chivalry", saying that it remains nothing after his death. Then, we must consider Ivanhoe's antagonist Bois-Guilbert, who is a member of the Templars. Rebecca opposes Guilbert, who says he is not afraid of death compared with disgrace in his chivalry. I'll quote their dialogue in chapter 39, where Guilbert talks of the courage of knights.

[Guilbert said], "[T]he idea of death is easily received by the courageous mind when the road to it is sudden and open. A thrust with a lance, a stroke with a sword were to me little [...], compared with disgrace."

"Unhappy man," said the Jewess, "and art thou condemned to expose thy life for principles, of which thy sober judgment does not acknowledge the solidity?" (426)

She cannot agree to his risking one's life for such a principle. She severely describes his principle as a wicked thing which he should realize by himself. Her criticism of Guilbert has the same tone as that of Ivanhoe. For her religious cause, she consistently denies violence. She should not accept the practice of chivalry, in which knights should risk their lives for the honour and glory.

I have confirmed the similarity of the hero and the antagonist in that Rebecca criticizes chivalry. Then, how does she unveil the true self of Ivanhoe and Guilbert in this scene? Rebecca's attack provokes the different responses from the two knights. Ivanhoe, angrily says "she [Chivalry] is the nurse of pure and

high affection—the stay of the oppressed, the redresser of grievances, the curb of the power of the tyrant" (316). However, Tara Ghoshal Wallace analyzes the conversation between *Ivanhoe* and Rebecca thus: "*Ivanhoe's* romance language has become so formulaic that it no longer expresses passionate engagement, while the critique of romance codes is articulated in images that are far more compelling" (301). In a word, Rebecca's criticism brings out the hero's idealistic self. We can know that the hero is too idealistic to notice faults of chivalry.

By comparison, Guilbert is better disputant to Rebecca, because he listens to her discourse earnestly. He admits his brutality and hypocrisy in chivalry to some extent. He exposes to Rebecca the disbelief prevailing inside his order of the Temple. Actually, he dismisses the ancient principle of the Templar as a fanatic idea and explains that his intention is to possess the power of the order to exceed the secular monarchs. After this revelation, he says, "I will not further withdrew the veil of our [the Templar's] mysteries" (257). As Rebecca conceals herself by her veil, Guilbert can hide himself behind the figurative veil of his Templars. However, there is a big difference between the two. Rebecca uses the veil to devote herself to religion, shaking off her personal feelings, while Guilbert uses the figurative veil to keep his worldly ambitions in the form of religion. She cannot forgive Guilbert's idea for the ambition and therefore, she does not accept his brutal love.

Guilbert's phrase of "the veil" implies that he has personal feelings to conceal by it. He only shows his personal aspect to Rebecca whom he considers as his best mate and she tries to unveil his suppressed self to soften his brutality. In the latter part of the novel, this antagonist talks with the Jewess more than *Ivanhoe* does. Then, he plays an important part because he comes to love Rebecca. In fact, she has a great influence on

Guilbert, who drives himself to death for it, but I'll discuss this in the next chapter. Here I want to conclude that Rebecca is a character who is entitled to find the suppressed self of the knights.

## II. The Function of Strong Passions

Near the end of the novel, Ivanhoe goes to rescue Rebecca, who is captured and going to be executed as a witch by the Knight Templar. To prove Rebecca's innocence, he fights a duel with the representative of the Templar, Guilbert, but unexpectedly, his opponent dies in the puzzling way. Scott explains about it thus: "[U]nscathed by the lance of his enemy [Ivanhoe], he [Guilbert] had died a victim to the violence of his contending passions" (490). Kenneth M. Sroka points out the peculiarity of this resolution: "It is not by Ivanhoe's valor that Bois-Guilbert is defeated, but an almost symbolic kind of self-destruction" (649). It is very interesting that hero's final victory is a product of the antagonist's "self-destruction". Then why does Scott describe it in this way? By examining his strong passions, I'd like to consider how Scott dramatizes the duel scene. First, I'll explore the cause of Guilbert's destruction in relation to his love for Rebecca.

Guilbert begins to have affection for Rebecca in early part of the novel. In chapter 21, when Norman villains capture Saxons and Jews in Torquilstone castle, Guilbert tells his friend de Bracy, who intends to woo Rowena, that he wants Jewess Rebecca as his mistress. He says, "I care not for your blue-eyed beauty [Rowena]. . . . I have a prize [Rebecca] among the captives as lovely as thy own" (222). In *The Secular Scripture*, Northrop Frye oversimplifies the events: "Rebecca is menaced in the style by a Norman noble, Brian Bois-Guilbert and she almost becomes a sacrificial victim" (85). The phrase "usual style" implies that Frye assumes the principle of romantic villains, which include



Guilbert. However, Frye does not provide any explanation of Guilbert's death as a "victim to the violence of contending passions". To solve the problem, I'll consider him as a "secret helper" of Rebecca in the appearance of a villain, for Guilbert, at last, makes attempts to save her life by betraying his order. Truly, he has villainous aspects, trying to seduce and kidnapping Rebecca to his preceptory, but he compensates for this behavior, by risking his own life and career to help her.

Guilbert is the elite of the brotherhood in the Templar and says, "Of this mighty Order I am no mean member, but already one of the Chief Commanders, and may well aspire one day to hold the baton of Grand Master" (257). However, the present Grand Master finds Guilbert concealing the Jewess in the preceptory. His fellow Templars convince the Grand Master of Rebecca's depriving him of the rationality. Here he faces the dilemma between his personal feelings and his brilliant career as a Templar, but ultimately, he chooses to save Rebecca. She is put into the trial as a witch by the Grand Master, but is also encouraged by receiving an anonymous letter to tell her how to survive: "The assurance that she possessed some friend in this awful assembly [of the trial] gave her courage..." (414). Actually, it is not the hero but Guilbert who encourages her to live at this crucial moment.

Rebecca, in her way to the trial, gets "a scrap of paper", but forgets it in the course of events. After the fanatic Christian, Grand Master sentences Rebecca to death, he commands Guilbert to testify to her guiltiness as a witch. This is the following scene.

[A]t last he replied, looking to Rebecca, — "The scroll — the scroll!"

"Ay," said Beaumanoir [the Grand Master], "this is indeed testimony! The victim of her witcheries [Guilbert] can only

name the fatal scroll, the spell inscribed on which is, doubtless, the cause of his silence."

But Rebecca put another interpretation on the words extorted as it were from Bois-Guilbert, and glancing her eye upon the slip of parchment, [...] she read written thereupon in the Arabian character, *Demand a Champion!* (414)

I think this is one of the most impressive scenes in *Ivanhoe*. Indeed, it is the very risky action for Guilbert because if the Grand Master finds his help, he will be punished with Rebecca. Therefore, Scott describes that he, at that time, seems "agitated by contending passions" (414), and then gives her hint in the riddled way. Guilbert secretly intends to become the champion to claim her innocence in the duel, but unfortunately the Grand Master, not realizing it, selects him as a representative of the Templar. Ironically, Ivanhoe appears as her champion. To save Rebecca, Guilbert must be defeated by his rival. As a result, his plan has backfired and his secret help drives himself to ruin.

It is interesting that Guilbert, who belongs to the Christian order of Temple, seems the last person to choose the Jewess as his partner. To explore his reason for loving Rebecca, I'd like to take up the scenes of his "confession". After his failure of wooing her, he begins to talk to Rebecca about the betrayal of his past love named Adelaide de Montemare. Guilbert says that his love broke the engagement during his absence and that for this broken heart, he was determined to desert the world by entering the order of the Temple. It seems that in his brain, the past love doubles with the present love for Rebecca. After the confession, Guilbert exclaims, "Rebecca! She who could prefer death to dishonor must have a proud and powerful soul. Mine must be!" (256). If the failed love makes him a Templar, then his new love is enough to make him renounce his career. For him, it's the opportunity to retrieve his true self. Therefore he

is determined to protect Rebecca, even if he betrays his order.

In his discourse with Rebecca, we can know Guilbert is actually a passionate man. He is involved in the conflict between the affection and sorrow for the unrewarded love. It is fatal for Guilbert that the hero appears as a champion for Rebecca. At first, Guilbert offers him to postpone the duel, for he would not like to defeat the injured hero and to witness Rebecca burned at a stake. He wishes he were a Jew "to be near thy [Rebecca] in life and to escape the fearful share I [Guilbert] must have in thy death" (433). By the word "the fearful share", he implies that if he sees her death, he would also suffer the mental damage in that event. However, Ivanhoe, not knowing his concern for her, scorns him as a "coward", to provoke him to battle for his honour. Guilbert's love for Rebecca changes for the anger for Ivanhoe. At the same time, he feels a sense of love, sorrow, shame, and anger, which increases violence beyond the excess. Thus with this burden of opposite feelings he finally loses control of himself by "contending passions".

I must add that the hero Ivanhoe isn't confronted with this kind of dilemma. As I have clarified in his discourse with Rebecca, the hero, who always believes in his chivalric justice, cannot understand Guilbert's complex feelings and passions. On the contrary, Rebecca understands his nature well. When Guilbert ascribes the failure of his plan to misfortune, she says, "Thus [...] do men throw on fate the issue of their own wild passions. But I do forgive thee, Bois-Guilbert. . . ." (434). Rebecca knows that Guilbert really has a conscience and feels regret and sorrow. It is his passions that make him evil. Then, we can conclude that Rebecca knows the existence of these self-destructive passions. Here I want to suggest that Ivanhoe is similar to Guilbert in this point. Actually, the hero is also possessed by strong passion for fighting. Rebecca notices it and

saves him beforehand from the violence of his passion. I'll discuss this problem in chapter 3.

When Guilbert suddenly dies, the Grand Master, surprised, exclaims, "This is indeed the judgment of God" (490) and the hero also accepts this idea. However, Clare A. Simmons says, "It is dangerous to conclude that this is Scott's own judgment, though, since it is spoken by the Grand Master, whose own judgment of Rebecca has been from the outset clearly wrong" (121). I agree with her opinion. The author Scott, knowing the truth, describes Guilbert's change of countenance in detail before the duel:

Ivanhoe was already at his post [for the duel], and had closed his visor, and assumed his lance. Bois-Guilbert did the same; and his esquire remarked, as he clasped his visor, that his face, which had, notwithstanding the variety of emotions by which he had been agitated, continued during the whole morning of an ashy paleness, was now suddenly very much flushed. (489-90)

From the viewpoint of Guilbert's esquire, the author skillfully describes the clue to his death. It is evident that "an ashy paleness" of his face is a symptom of mental disorder. While Ivanhoe is physically injured, being scarce able to support himself from weariness, Guilbert suffers the mental damage by "the variety of emotions" for Rebecca. Although Ivanhoe's scornful words ignite Guilbert's spirit, he is not in a condition to withstand more stress of his fighting spirits. Scott considers the "contending passions" can produce the "violence". Guilbert's passions destroy himself before he defeats injured Ivanhoe.

Then, how did Walter Scott come up with the idea of Guilbert's self-destruction? About this problem, Graham Tulloch makes an interesting comment from the biographical aspect: "[In his letter,] Scott commented to Terry [his friend] that 'the

contending passions of shame and anger and sorrow fairly burst the flood-gates of life. Was not this a truly dramatic exit?'<sup>4</sup> About six weeks later, Scott was to write of Bois-Guilbert's death, using an identical phrase, that 'he had died a victim to the violence of his own contending passions' (406). We can guess that his "contending passions" can be the mixture of shame, anger, and sorrow, by this episode. If Scott keeps the image of flood in mind when he described Guilbert's end, it's an interesting topic. Let us consider the comparison of his will to a mountain stream: "His [Guilbert's] will is the mountain stream, which may indeed be turned for a little space aside by the rock, but fails not to find its course to the ocean" (428-29). Borrowing his words, we can say "the mountain stream" of his will may "flood" uncontrollably to burst his own "flood-gates of life". The outburst of his strong passions washes away the wickedness of the Templars and purges the final scene to prove Rebecca's innocence. Thus, Scott puts an emphasis on his passions effectively by using metaphors of flood.

Thus, we have confirmed how strong passions lead to death. I must add that it is not only in *Ivanhoe* that Scott describes characters' passions in detail. Here I'll take up his former novel *The Bride of Lammermoor*, published in 1819. The hero, the master of Ravenswood, faces the dilemma between love for Lucy Ashton and revenge for her family. He is also possessed by the "monstrous passion", which is compared to "one great goodly snake".<sup>5</sup> This hero also perishes in the puzzling way, disappearing in the Kelpie's flow. We can find the similarities between Guilbert and Ravenswood in the function of strong passions. Here, I must conclude that we should direct more attention to his aspects of the drive for destruction. Judging by the both cases, we can say Scott emphasizes the tragic self-destruction more than the prosperity in the happy ending.

Now let us examine the hero's prosperity in *Ivanhoe*. Alexander Welsh, in his well-known study *The Hero of the Waverley Novels*, claims that most of Scott's novels have happy endings: "Individuals voluntarily surrender their prerogatives to complex social restraints and to the rule of law, [...] in order to escape from the unruly past, when the sway of passion and force prohibited social gains" (144). Truly, after the destruction of those possessed by passions, King Richard establishes a new social order, producing prosperity. However, if the author aimed to emphasize the birth of this new social order, Scott should have made the hero's marriage as a denouement of this novel. We must not forget that in the end of *Ivanhoe* there is a brief reference to death of King Richard. That's to say, the society, to which characters surrender their prerogative is in danger of collapsing. Alexander Welsh is wrong, because he doesn't consider the possibility of the collapse of the new order.

Scott reassures readers that *Ivanhoe* lives long happily, but implies a touch of uneasiness: "He [*Ivanhoe*] might have still higher, but for the premature death of the heroic *Coeur-de-Lion*" (502). Society may return to the condition of unruly past when the sway of passion and force prohibited social gains. We can say that Scott describes the hero's prosperity as temporal. In the contrast, the author dramatizes the duel scene more effectively by *Guilbert's* self-destruction, not by the hero's victory. He confesses to *Rebecca* what he used to be and makes attempts to retrieve his true self in vain, by renouncing his order for his new love. In this point, he makes a vivid contrast with the ignorant and simple hero, in his passionate sudden death by the "contending passions". Truly, *Ivanhoe* lives long and happily, but he cannot get the true prosperity, not being promoted.

So far I've confirmed the failure of *Guilbert's* self-change, but it's also important to consider the success of the hero. The

antagonist Guilbert has a kind of similarity with the hero, as a knight, but they reach a different end. Why does this happen? We must not overlook the fact that Scott says that the hero's success is brought by Rebecca's earnest care. I'd like to consider how Rebecca removes Ivanhoe of his strong passion for fighting. In the next chapter, I'll discuss Rebecca's healing power over hero's physical and mental injuries.

### III. Rebecca's Healing Power

First, I'd like to take up the marriage-scene which plays an important role in the union of Normans and Saxons. However, Scott describes it too shortly and drily:

[T]hese distinguished nuptials were celebrated by the attendance of the high-born Normans, as well as Saxons, joined with the universal jubilee of the lower orders, that marked the marriage of two individuals as a pledge of the future peace and harmony betwixt two races. . . . (498)

By using the word "universal jubilee" or "pledge", the author only describes the function of the marriage and doesn't describe the personal feelings, which we naturally expect. Here I'd like to quote from Wolfgang Iser's comment on Scott's endings: "Scott uses irony and omission to preserve the integrity of his intentions: to push his hero discreetly into the background" (78). Certainly, we can feel that Scott omits the description of the marriage scene, but we must consider why we feel such an impression in the apparent denouement. This is because we can feel the absence of the important character, the Jewess Rebecca, in this scene.

It is on the second morning after the marriage when Rebecca appears in hero's apartment. As I've discussed in the introduction, Rebecca plays an important role here to remove Rowena's bridal

veil. This is the real last scene of *Ivanhoe*. After describing Ivanhoe's happy domestic life, Scott adds, "Yet it would be enquiring too curiously to ask whether the recollection of Rebecca's beauty and magnanimity did not recur to his mind more frequently than [Rowena] have approved" (502). As is suggested by this sentence, Ivanhoe is more emotionally connected with the Jewess Rebecca than his fiancée Rowena. We can say that Rebecca makes a deep impression on Ivanhoe, for Rebecca takes care of the hero physically and mentally. Northrop Frye also refers to Rebecca's power in the context of romance, but contrary to his view, I'll put this healing power in the opposition to strong passions. As a critic of chivalry, she has an influence on both the hero and Guilbert. Then let us clarify the process of the hero's unconscious change with Rebecca's care.

First, we should take up the scene of their first meeting. After Ivanhoe's faint from bleeding in the tournament, Rebecca transports the unconscious hero to her father Isaac's house. When the hero recovers his consciousness, he finds himself lying in the strange room. Scott describes Ivanhoe's surprise thus: "[I]n other respects partaking so much of Oriental costume, that he began to doubt whether he had not during his sleep, being transported back to Palestine" (297). In the Oriental atmosphere, he cannot be convinced of his being home. His anxiety of "being transported back to Palestine" is very interesting, if we consider the fact that the novel begins with Ivanhoe's return from Palestine. It is a kind of fear about returning to the starting point. This lapse of time and place happens, and then Rebecca enters into the room like "a fair apparition". Considering her last exit is perceived by Rowena as if "a vision has passed" (502), she must have the feature to confuse a sense of reality. Regardless of hero's anxiety of being returned to Palestine, she assures him that he will be able to battle within eight days if he



listens to her directions. However, she commands him "[T]hink not, speak not now, of aught that may retard thy recovery" during that time. Thus, the hero can be completely under Rebecca's control.

Actually, *Ivanhoe*, as well as *Guilbert*, is possessed by strong passion in the form of fighting spirits. Although Rebecca's father Isaac advises him to "thrust thyself not too forward in this hurly-burly [tournament]", he boasts of his bravery to *Guilbert*, "I am fitter to meet death than thou art" (107), and risks his life immediately to win the battle. He also cannot afford to take care of his horse and armor. Seeing him battle, Rebecca says to her father, who laments his lack of care for the goods which he borrows, "If he [*Ivanhoe*] risks his own person and limbs [...] in doing such a dreadful battle, he can scarce be expected to spare horse and armour" (116). It is before they meet directly that we can see Rebecca's anxiety about *Ivanhoe*'s drive for destruction. At that time, he believes the laws of chivalry that knights "wish not to live longer" than while they are "victorious and renowned" as he says to Rebecca. As a result, he falls in a faint after defeating all opponents in the tournaments.

Let us now consider the significance of the horse on which *Ivanhoe* rides. Actually, the tie between man and horse is an important aspect in this novel. The author Scott describes "the wonderful talent possessed by these animals [horses] for extricating themselves and their riders" (179). In the tournament, the hero, who is surrounded by enemies, manages to escape danger by his horsemanship. Scott describes the scene thus: "Nothing could have saved him, except the remarkable strength and activity of the noble horse which he had won on the preceding day" (145). Judith Wilt claims, "[In this novel,] the horse is the symbol of power" (40). I agree with her in considering horses as a symbol, but she is wrong in supposing *Ivanhoe*, from the

beginning, has the dexterity to control his horse well. As we have observed, Ivanhoe's horsemanship has a risk to perish both horse and himself. Rather, I'll define the horse as a symbol of knight's self-control because he must rein not only the horse but also their passions for fighting. We can guess that Ivanhoe's gentle treatment of his horse would imply the fact that he learns to control himself well.

We have confirmed the scene of Ivanhoe's first meeting with Rebecca. Then, in turn, we should see Ivanhoe's sleeping from Rebecca's viewpoint. In chapter 29, hearing King Richard comes to rescue him, he is suddenly possessed by strong passion to fight for the king and struggles with Rebecca who stops him. After the controversy, Rebecca, in seeing Ivanhoe, who falls into sleep from tiredness, says to herself:

[Rebecca said,] "He sleeps, [...] nature exhausted by sufferance and the waste of spirits, his wearied frame embraces the first moment of temporary relaxation to sink into slumber. . . . When yet but a short space, and those fair features will be no longer animated by the bold and buoyant spirit which forsakes them not even in sleep!—When the nostril shall be distended, the mouth agape, the eyes fixed and bloodshot. (317)

Here, we should not overlook the phrase "the nostril shall be distended, the mouth agape, the eyes fixed and bloodshot". This distorted face shows hero's aggressiveness, as Guilbert's flushed face before the duel. It seems improper for hero's description, but we can confirm that Ivanhoe is also possessed by strong passions by her observation. According to Rebecca, there is an inner struggle between "the buoyant spirit" and strong passion for battle. However, we can say in this scene his passion is conquered by Rebecca, for he accepts sleep, "the first moment of

temporary relaxation". Thus, sleeping Ivanhoe recovers his "handsome" features, not disturbed by his passion for fighting.

We have observed that Rebecca heals Ivanhoe by getting him off to sleep. Now I'll prove the fact that Ivanhoe learns to take care of himself. After his rescue, King Richard also commands him to repose himself in the priory of Saint Botolph. To follow the king, he asks the prior if he can borrow the palfrey on which he can travel comfortably. It is important that her rides the palfrey, instead of the war-horse for the first time. Being aware of his wounds, he takes priority to the comfortableness rather than speed. The prior kindly allows Ivanhoe to use his favorite palfrey, named "Malkin". The prior asks him to treat Malkin gently, making a joke: "She [Malkin] is the most dangerous period for maidens as well as mares [...] being barely in her fifteenth year" (441). In the tournament, Ivanhoe didn't take care of his horse, but now, he has the tolerance to treat softly this female old palfrey. In addition, in chapter 41, Ivanhoe appears riding on this palfrey while his squire is on the hero's war-horse. Obviously, Rebecca changes his nature during his unconsciousness. Thus we can conclude that he learns to "rein" not only his horse, but also himself.

In contrast, his antagonist, Guilbert is the last man to rein himself. When his fellow Templar lays his hand on Guilbert's rein, trying to soothe his passions for Rebecca, Guilbert says angrily, "What meanest thou by thy hand on my rein?" (487), and shakes off the grasp. As is symbolically suggested in this scene, Guilbert lacks his self-control and doesn't take care of his horse at all. He tries to force his horse to obey to his passions. Before the duel, he invites Rebecca to escape with him, making the reference to his horse. He says, "Mount behind me on my steed — on Zamour, the gallant horse that never failed his rider. . . — in one short hour is pursuit and enquiry far behind" (487).

Zamour is the excellent horse to achieve his desires to escape with Rebecca. However, Rebecca does not accept his offer. She replies, "Tempter... begone! — Not in this last extremity canst thou move me one hair's-breath from my resting place..." (487) She considers him as a "tempter" to disturb her determination to be a martyr. For Guilbert, Zamour is a "great help" to achieve his dream to escape from his order, but for Rebecca it is nothing but a "nightmare". Thus, Guilbert suffers from the mental disorder before Ivanhoe appears. Ironically, in the duel with the hero, his horse leads him to the very end of his desire, that's to say, death.

Rebecca helps Ivanhoe to get rid of the course of destruction, which Guilbert follows. His first delusion of "being transported back to Palestine" signifies his rebirth symbolically after his wandering between life and death. With Rebecca's care, he is not what he used to be in the tournament. Indeed, she has a great influence on the fortunes of Ivanhoe. We can say Rebecca's healing power is an antidote for Ivanhoe's drive for the destruction. That's why Scott intentionally describes Rebecca more charmingly than hero's fiancée Rowena by making the Jewess meeting her in the last scene. The Jewess, who can control her internal feelings, is only person to criticize him for his passions for the battle. Rebecca has a kind of triumph over other characters like Rowena for her influence, for she can stick to her religion till the last without being disturbed by her love for him.

Richard L. Stein describes the ending of Scott's novel as "the weakest thread in Scott's tapestry, because it is "hasty, flat, and altogether predictable" (224). However, in *Ivanhoe*, Scott intentionally chooses its last scene to impress Rebecca's figure deeply on their memory. Although she is saved by Ivanhoe, she has influenced him deeply before the rescue. She can only criticize the chivalry, but also moderate it to her taste. We can feel

Rebecca's presence throughout the novel. By creating the outsider Rebecca, Scott produces a critical viewpoint to the Christian culture in *Ivanhoe*, for she holds a mirror up to the true self of knights.

### **Conclusion**

In *Ivanhoe*, Scott succeeds in describing the defaults of chivalry by making Rebecca criticize it from the Jewish point of view. As I have discussed, this novel deals not only with apparent racial problems, but also with the internal conflicts of characters. In the climax, the author Scott must stop the outburst of the passions in the new social order which King Richard establishes. However, although Rebecca leaves England for Spain in the last scene, she remains in hero's mind as a recollection even after king's death. We can say that Rebecca's impression is too strong to erase from the memory.

In this thesis, I've considered how Scott effectively dramatizes the scenes by describing their internal conflicts vividly. I've made a focus especially on the expression of "the victim to the violence of contending passions" and considered how *Ivanhoe* can avoid that course which Gilbert follows. In both cases, Rebecca, who can control herself well, has a sense to find out their destructive aspects. Therefore, this novel should be evaluated not for a traditional chivalric plot, but for the dialogues between the critic Rebecca and the knights. *Ivanhoe* can be one of Scott's best novels for its detailed description of their feelings for Rebecca. She is really a protagonist, who has the right to withdraw the bridal veil of *Ivanhoe*'s wife and Gilbert's veil of the Templars. Then, she can judge the value of the dominant Christian culture as an outsider, Jewess.

Again, I'd like to discuss why Scott describes his passion for writing as "a Fiend of Chivalry". *Ivanhoe* is not Scott's imitation

of medieval romance. In this novel, there exists what I can call Scott's poetics of fiction. The author Scott must have been aware that it is dangerous to commit himself too much to fighting spirits. He must expel them outside from his mind by writing the novel. Then, he directs the critical gaze to the chivalry by making Rebecca criticize *Ivanhoe* and *Guilbert*. Among those conflicts of opponent ideas, Scott can produce the excellent dramatic moments.

### Notes

- 1 Walter Scott, "To William Wordsworth," 16 March 1805, *The Letters of Sir Walter Scott*, ed. H. J. C. Grierson, vol. 1 (New York: AMS, 1971) 240.
- 2 Walter Scott, *Ivanhoe*, ed. Ian Duncan (1819; Oxford: Oxford UP, 1996). All references to the novel are to this edition and page numbers are shown in parenthesis.
- 3 For Rebecca's use of the veil, see Alide Cagidemetro's "A Plea for Fictional Histories and Old-Time 'Jewesses' in *The Invention of Ethnicity*" (New York: Oxford UP, 1989).
- 4 Walter Scott, "To Daniel Terry," 28 September 1819, *The Letters of Sir Walter Scott*, ed. H. J. C. Grierson, vol. 5 (New York: AMS, 1971) 501.
- 5 Walter Scott, *Bride of Lammermoor*, ed. J. H. Alexander (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1995) 58.

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