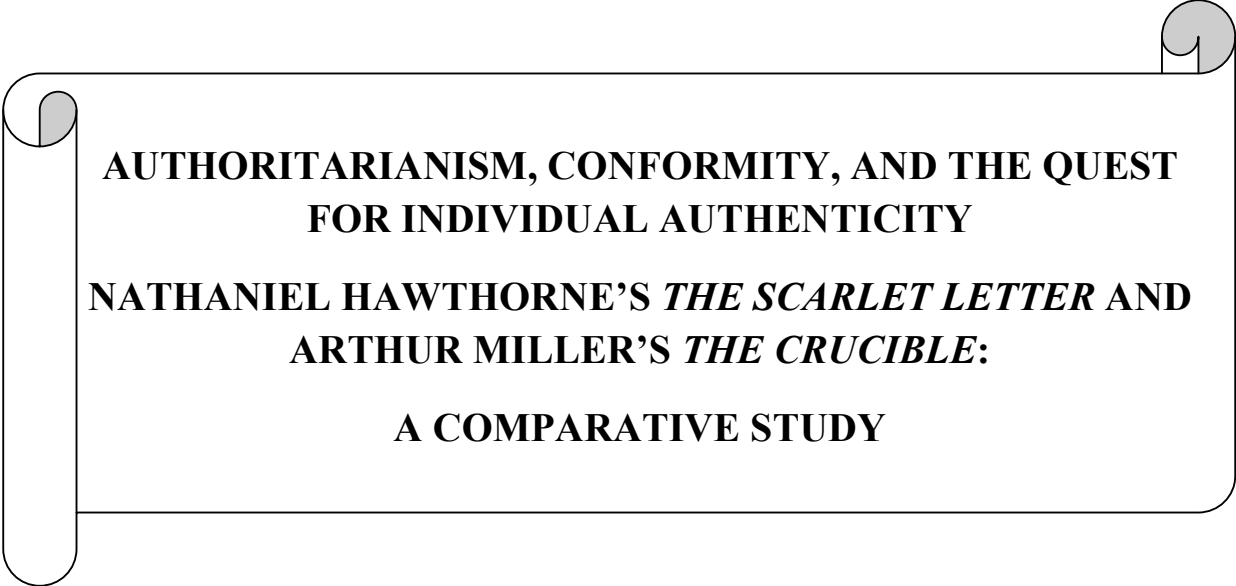


University of Algiers 2- Bouzareah

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**AUTHORITARIANISM, CONFORMITY, AND THE QUEST  
FOR INDIVIDUAL AUTHENTICITY**  
**NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE'S *THE SCARLET LETTER* AND  
ARTHUR MILLER'S *THE CRUCIBLE*:**  
**A COMPARATIVE STUDY**

**Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree  
of Magister in English**

**Option: Literature / Civilization**

Submitted by: Miss. Ounis Chahrazed

Supervised by: Prof. Yamina Déramchia

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### **Declaration**

I hereby declare that the substance of this dissertation is entirely the result of my investigation and that due reference or acknowledgement is made, whenever necessary, to the work of other researchers.

Date: .....

Signature: .....

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Thank YOU all.

## *Dedication*

*I would like to dedicate this dissertation to the light of my life and the source of my happiness, my dear parents Ahmed and Loundja. There is no doubt that without their continued support, love, patience, and counsel I could not have completed this process.*

*To my affectionate sisters: Houda, Sounaad, Rania, and dear brothers: Sami, Alaae, and Ramzi.*

*To the delight of my eyes, Chaker Rezzgani, whose presence was, is, and will remain the best I could ever have.*

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## **Abstract**

This dissertation is a contribution towards investigating the themes of authoritarianism, conformity and the search for individual authenticity in American literature, notably, in Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) and Arthur Miller's play *The Crucible* (1953). The study adopts Ihab Hassan's theory of comparative literature which claims that the similarity that can be found between literary works is a result of the similarities in the historical and cultural circumstances that surrounded and led to the production of these literary works. Thus, the present work sets out to determine how *The Scarlet Letter* and *The Crucible* link to each other both in terms of the themes under study and the historical context. The present research work studies the themes of authoritarianism and conformity and examines, subsequently, the extent to which it is successful for an individual to resist conformity and achieve an authentic sense of the self. The topic of the study is approached in a New Historicist perception which helps to relate the literary works in question with their sociopolitical context. Furthermore, authoritarianism in both works is studied in the light of Michel Foucault's theoretical ideas on institutional social power and disciplinary mechanisms. Additionally, because it is an inevitable resulting behavior and an aspect characteristic of authoritarian social modes, conformity is equally treated as a theme. This is pursued through reference to works on social psychology, notably but not exclusively, Herbert Kelman's study of conformity processes. Thus, in examining the theme of conformity, the project assesses the characters' conformity to the Puritan authorities and the established norms. Finally, in the light of the Foucauldian / Greenblattian 'deterministic' view of the relation between social power and individual resistance, the present research work sets out to question the individualistic qualities and the inner-directedness of the protagonists under study (Hester Prynne and John Proctor). Upon determining the protagonists' fake or true non-conformity, the research work points towards evaluating the fruitfulness of their resistance to social repression and conformity, hence the possibility of attaining their individual selfhood.

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# Introduction

## Introduction:

The individual has always been in continuous struggle with various surrounding forces. Among these forces is the social group that can sometimes transform into a harsh institution imposing social uniformity and constituting, therefore, a threat to personal liberties. Indeed, the appropriate relation between individual autonomy and group authority is a basic human dilemma. This unending conflict between the individual and his social environment is a subject of interest in different disciplines, such as sociology, philosophy, and even literature. In literature, the issue was the concern of many literary minds, precisely those who belong to a nation that labels personal liberty as one of the 'inalienable rights' and which constituted, in its early history, an asylum for those whose liberties were restrained. Although the subject is dealt with in many American literary works, Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*<sup>1</sup> and Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*<sup>2</sup> are the works that are selected to highlight the issue. The selection of these two works is not done at random; rather, it is due to the close connections between them in terms of theme, background and plot. Indeed, although the works in question are products of different periods -- *The Scarlet Letter* is a nineteenth-century romance while *The Crucible* is a twentieth-century play -- they share thematic similarities. More clearly, they both trace the journey of 'sinful' protagonists who break the Puritan Law and stand against its strict social and ideological mode in quest of their individual freedom and authenticity. In addition, the romance and the theatrical work are set in the seventeenth century taking the American Puritan period as the literary background, which explains the tendency to classify them as allegorical works. In fact, both writers draw upon this period of American history to describe certain realities about the time in which their works were produced.

Regarding the relation between fiction / art and reality, the two authors seem to share similar standpoints. Arthur Miller refuses to view the theatrical imagination and art as an escape from the real, but rather as an instrument that clears up and polishes

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<sup>1</sup> Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) (London: The Penguin Popular Classics, 1994) Further reference to the novel will be integrated within the text.

<sup>2</sup> Arthur Miller, *The Crucible* (1953) (London: The Penguin Group, 2000) Further reference to the play will be integrated within the text.

life. In “Notes on Realism,” Miller affirms the necessity to employ the artificial in order to arrive at the real. Although stylization in the theater may draw people away from reality, in the end it helps to remove the obscurity that surrounds real life.<sup>3</sup> The nineteenth-century novelist Nathaniel Hawthorne demonstrates an equal standpoint concerning the objective of fiction. Writing romances conveys idealistic implications as romances are considered a passport into the exotic and the ideal that readers lack in real life. Romantic and adventure writings flourished during the nineteenth century; however, Nathaniel Hawthorne seems to detach himself from the idealistic romanticism in his writings as he holds a viewpoint, resembling that of Arthur Miller, about the connection between fiction and truth, or the ideal and the actual. More explicitly, for Hawthorne, the aspects of experience that are hidden from the public view can only be brought to light through the author’s imagination.<sup>4</sup> Thus, for the romance writer and the playwright, artistic writing requires imagination or artificiality, not as an end in itself, but rather as a bridge to the real. In other words, imagination takes readers away only to bring them back to where they actually are.

In addition to their similar view on the illuminating function of artistic writing, the novelist and the playwright share distrust of authoritarian repressive behavior, intolerance, and condemn the abuse of civil liberties. Although Nathaniel Hawthorne held ambiguous positions towards the revolutionary movements that developed in his time, he had a poor opinion of authoritarian people and of all forms of repression that restrict personal liberties. Arthur Miller, as well, was known for his open revolutionary attitudes both at the private and the public level. His first marriage to a Catholic woman and his ‘attachment’ to Communism during the 1930s provide key evidence of his reclusiveness and diverse vision. Thus, their similar principles in promoting liberty and disobedience against repression explain their creation of works whose protagonists stand equally against the Puritan mode of life and thought of their societies, are punished as social outcasts, and seek to preserve an authentic sense of the self.

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<sup>3</sup> Steven R. Centola, *Echoes Down The Corridor, Arthur Miller, Collected Essays 1944-2000* (London: Methuen Publishing, 2000),p.311.

<sup>4</sup> Mellissa M.Pennell, *Masterpieces of American Romantic Literature* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2006), p.81.

This comparative work is based on the ideas of the Egyptian-born American theorist Ihab Hassan which are suggested as an alternative to the theory of influence in comparative literature. The theory is based on the idea that similar social and historical conditions create a harmony or similarity in literature. Ihab Hassan's theory -- sometimes referred to as "the parallelism theory" -- claims that the affinity between the literatures of different peoples can derive from a similarity in the social circumstances in which the literary works were produced regardless of whether there is any direct relation between these societies.<sup>5</sup> More explicitly, rather than focusing on the writers' direct or mutual influence, the center of attention is on the similarity in the circumstances surrounding and leading to the production of these literary works. The case under study does not concern works that are linguistically or culturally different, rather it relates to works created by writers from the same society, yet from different periods. The concern of this study is to spotlight the similar historical patterns or conditions that drove two writers from two distinct eras to write about similar issues and produce similar works. This tradition or historical pattern that connects the novel to the play, Hawthorne to Miller, and notably period to period (the 1840s with the 1950s) is the authoritarian tendency and the anti-democratic behavior. It is indeed that demand for conformity and the fear from the new or the intellectually different. This results when a specific ideology -- principles, beliefs, and ideas -- set by and for the interest of a particular category in society dominates the public mind in an attempt to empower or preserve the power of that social category, therefore, leading to a repression of civil liberties, notably intellectual ones. Contextually speaking, the 1950s historical context of McCarthyism may lead to view the play as a more appropriate work to highlight the themes under study. Nevertheless, although the 1840s demonstrated no explicit or outspoken manifestations of authoritarianism and open demand for conformity as it was the case with the 1950s, the romance's Puritan background renders explicit what was historically implicit and equivocal. In the 1840s, there were, in fact, implicit manifestations of authoritarian tendencies and undeclared aggression towards a 'threatening idea.' The latter was represented by women's

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<sup>5</sup> Ihab Hassan, "the Problems of Influence in Literary History: Notes toward a Definition," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol.14, N°. 1 (1955), p. 75.

liberating movement and intellectual writings which constituted a destabilizing ‘new’ element to the established patriarchal mode. Therefore, both *The Scarlet Letter* and *The Crucible* serve as suitable literary examples to study the themes in question.

America during the antebellum years saw the rise of women thinkers and intellectuals who pioneered the feminist movement that presented a danger to the then patriarchal culture. The latter promoted patriarchal tenets despite the country’s laws and slogans of gender equality. The novel’s protagonist, Hester Prynne, with her independent spirit, poses a potential threat to the Puritan norms of patriarchy and its authority. In Modern America, government institutions, the press, the media, and even art were all utilized to sustain the anti-communist mode which the state engaged in and maintained. *The Crucible*, itself a resisting act, shows how the state manipulated the public mind with this ideology of present ‘threatening’ communists. The idea is conveyed in the play through the witch-hunt event of 1692 which represents the communists’ ‘hunt’ in the cold war period. John Proctor’s stand and ideological opposition to the imposed mode menaces the conformity dictated by the Salem authority. Therefore, this authoritarian tendency to anti-intellectualism towards different thinking is a recurrent phenomenon in the history of the nation, and eventually in its literature, thus, it deserves to be looked at and studied thoroughly. Some works have looked at the theme of intolerance of intellectual difference in literary works created in the 1950s, that is, during the Cold War McCarthyist time. The present research work, however, offers to tackle the subject within its wide and manifold context by focusing on larger and expanded issues; that is, on authoritarianism and conformity. Additionally, the dissertation traces the stated themes along American history and reveals the continuity of the phenomena in the history and the literature of the nation. In other words, by tracing the themes in literary works that came out of different periods in the nation’s history, the research widens the scope of treating the issues in question as historical phenomena and literary themes as well.

Through a comparative study, this research work aims at examining the themes of authoritarianism and conformity as presented in each of the literary works under study, *The Scarlet Letter* and *The Crucible*, in an attempt to look further and disclose

the nature and realities of the issues stated above both as sociopolitical phenomena and literary themes. Additionally, the study investigates the extent to which individuals' resistance to conformity is fruitful and attaining an authentic sense of the self is possible. In analyzing the protagonists' deviance and perverse vision, the research work applies Michel Foucault's and Stephen Greenblatt's notions on free selfhood, social resistance, and rebellion to both works in question. More explicitly, the former attributes absolute power to social structures that predetermine even modes of social opposition.<sup>6</sup> Thus, for Foucault opposition is a process by which social power and conformity are enhanced. Greenblatt denies the existence of true selfhood and excludes the notion of 'self fashioning' by claiming that human beings are products of the relations of power in their societies.<sup>7</sup> Both views bear the inevitability of social conformity. Eventually, the research work questions Hester Prynne's and John Proctor's state as 'true' rebellious individuals and non-conformists to ultimately reveal the result of their disobedience and search for personal freedom and authenticity. Accordingly, we aspire to disclose the works' position towards authoritarianism, social conformity, and the extent to which the authors are willing to free and support their protagonists in their quest. Finally, in comparing a nineteenth-century novel and a twentieth-century play, this research work eventually abridges the gap between nineteenth-century and the twentieth-century American cultures, draws together two genres, namely, literary fiction and Drama, and more importantly, offers a fusion and a combination of two trends of literature, notably American Romanticism and Modernist theater.

The questionings stated above are to be studied through applying a new historicist approach. Despite the claim of some critical approaches, like the New Criticism, that the text is the sole source of evidence for its interpretation, knowledge about the historical background remains necessary for a successful interpretation of any work. All literary works are produced at a given time, thus consciously or unconsciously, willingly or unwillingly, we make a link between the text and its

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<sup>6</sup> Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power," *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 8, N°. 4, The University of Chicago Press, (1982), p. 790.

<sup>7</sup> Stephen Greenblatt, cited in Frank Lentricchia, "Foucault's Legacy: A New Historicism?" In Aram Veesser, *The New Historicism* (New York: Routledge, 1989), pp. 238-239.

history. Mentioning, looking for, or asking about the year in which a particular work was produced is a strong admittance of history and of this undeniable connection. Stephen Greenblatt, the founding figure of The New Historicism, responds to the call for the exclusion of history and the emphasis on the literary text as a self-contained unity with a comprehensive attention and full consideration of the surrounding contextual references:

The work of art is not itself a pure flame that lies at the source of our speculations. Rather the work of art is itself the product of a set of manipulations, some of them our own [...] many others undertaken in the construction of the original work. That is, the work of art is the product of a negotiation between a creator or class of creators, equipped with a complex, communally shared repertoire of conventions, and the institutions and practices of society.<sup>8</sup>

In defining the work of art as such, Greenblatt insists on giving equal weight and importance to text and history. Therefore, considered as expressions of the same historical period as literary works are, historical documents and sociopolitical references shall throw ample light not only on our understanding and accurate interpretation of the works in question, but also will clarify the thematic and functional affinities of the selected literary works. However, the topic of the present research dictates a selection of these historical documents. Thus, only historical works and cultural references which are relevant to the theme of the present research are to be considered. Furthermore, the dissertation attempts to find out and to determine the historical significance and participation of the works under study. Therefore, the notion of knowledge as power of the French philosopher and historian Michel Foucault is applied in an attempt to uncover how each literary work participates in the ideologies and sociopolitical norms prevailing in each period. More clearly, since literature and history are intertwined and literature is shaped by and shapes history, the present research work attempts to uncover whether *The Scarlet Letter* and *The*

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<sup>8</sup> Stephen Greenblatt, "Towards a Poetics of Culture" In Aram Veesser, ed. *The New Historicism* (New York: Routledge, 1989), p.12.

*Crucible*, each in its own time, carry a discourse<sup>9</sup> that maintain or denounce the authoritarian tendencies in the two periods.

Although the research is approached mainly through a new historicist perception or view, other considerations dictate a reference to particular feminist links. In other words, the selection of a novel that was created in the period of the Feminist Movement and whose protagonist is a woman that defies the patriarchal foundations of the Puritan system makes it compulsory and academically adequate to apply particular feminist thoughts and notions. Male authors' handling of female concerns seems to be rejected by some feminists, as Nancy K. Miller and Mary Ellman<sup>10</sup> who claim male authors' impossibility to live, thus, transmit truthfully women's experience. They insist on the fundamental role that the social constructions of sexual difference play in the production as well as reception of literature. Knowing that Nathaniel Hawthorne held an ambiguous stance towards feminist thinkers or 'the mob of scribbling women' of his time makes his choice of a female revolutionist heroine enigmatic and puzzling. Thus, ample attention is directed to question the portrayal of Hester Prynne, her radicalism, and eventually the result of her search for individualism. Therefore, a feminist reading of the novel in question helps to determine the position of the author and *The Scarlet Letter* towards the ideologies of the time, that is, whether the romance defends the feminist movement or maintains the patriarchal ideology. Having a clear idea about the latter will be eventually useful for a comprehensive and accurate treatment of the themes of the current research in the novel.

The dissertation consists of three chapters, one contextual and two analytical. Chapter one examines the biographical and the sociopolitical background of the two works and seeks to reveal the historical pattern that links author to author, work to work, and especially period to period (the 1840s with the 1950s). Therefore, section one places the novel within the movements of the time, particularly, the Feminist

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<sup>9</sup> The word 'discourse' in this research work is adopted from the philosopher Michel Foucault's notion of discourse. It is used to refer to the discursive power of the works under study in maintaining or resisting the prevalent ideologies in the time of their production.

<sup>10</sup> Nancy K. Miller's book *The Poetics of Gender* (1986) attempts at disclosing the effect of gender in the writing as well as the reception of literary works in society while Mary Ellman's *Thinking about Women* (1986) examines the gendered representations in British and American literature. The present research work applies the ideas of these two scholars in the literary analysis of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*.

Movement and determines its significant participation to these concerns. Section two examines how the anti-communist discourse and the anti-democratic ideologies of the 1950s are ‘textualized’ in the play and how the latter participates in these discourses. The last section of the chapter looks at biographical elements in an attempt to uncover possible connections between the authors under study, notably in their stance towards issues like political / social repression, individual freedom, and resistance.

Chapter two treats the themes of authoritarianism and conformity as manifested in the works in question. Since the Puritan background constitutes the basic fictional setting in both works, a section is devoted to look at authoritarianism and conformity in American Puritanism in order to identify the connecting link between Puritan, Republican, and Modern America. In other words, the first section identifies the familiarity that the romance writer and the playwright may have observed with the Puritan era and which drove them to set their works in this particular unpleasant period. Section Two investigates the theme of authoritarianism in Nathaniel Hawthorne’s novel and Arthur Miller’s play. Both works in question contain strikingly similar settings which are mainly ‘disciplinary’ institutions or instruments, namely, the church, the court, the prison, and the scaffold. Therefore, the theme of authoritarianism is treated by demonstrating the authoritarian aspects in these settings through reference to Michel Foucault’s notions on institutional power, discipline, and punishment. Section three in this chapter examines the theme of conformity through characterization i.e. through analyzing and evaluating the characters’ conformity and response to the authorities and the imposed Puritan norms. Therefore, the chapter assesses the association of the characters in each of the works in question to the types of conformity processes, internalization, compliance, and identification as defined by Herbert Kelman.

As for the third chapter, it investigates the possibility of achieving personal or individual selfhood within the conditions of authoritarianism and social conformity. Therefore, this chapter is devoted to the protagonist of *The Scarlet Letter* and of *The Crucible*, Hester Prynne and John Proctor respectively. The chapter evaluates the protagonists’ individualism, questions their non-conformity from a Foucaultian /

Greenblattian perspective, and finally assesses the fruitfulness of their resistance and quest. Therefore, the chapter is divided into three sections. Section one looks at manifestations that establish Hester and Proctor as social deviants, non-conformists, and individualists. Section two is devoted to questioning their resistance and state as social deviants and individualists through applying a Foucauldian / Greenblattian view. The final section eventually inquires the scope of Hester's and Proctor's quest for individual authenticity. Thus, it questions the authors' willingness to allow their protagonists to achieve or attain their personal liberties.

# Chapter One

## **Sociopolitical Background**

## Chapter One

### Sociopolitical Background

Since literature is not merely a reflection of historical facts but is “at once part of the fact itself and what gives shape to what we know as the fact,”<sup>11</sup> this chapter aims at exploring the historical movements and discourses present in each historical period; the 1840s and the 1950s. The purpose is to reveal how the literary discourse in each of the works under study *participates* in the historical facts. Although Arthur Miller wrote *The Crucible* a century after Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter*, the affinities between the two works seem to go beyond thematic similarities to include contextual ones. Indeed, in attempting to uncover how the two writers -- belonging to two distant and distinct eras -- could produce similar works, I found the historical contexts of both works quite revealing. More explicitly, both authors drew upon New England’s history to communicate certain messages about the dominant ideologies and discourses in their contemporary societies. However, while Miller resorted to American Puritanism and precisely to the Puritan Salem event of 1692 to satirize a political situation, Hawthorne’s use of the same background aims at rendering a social preoccupation, particularly a preoccupation that concerns women. Therefore, section one exposes the novel’s participation in the ideologies circulating within the Feminist Movement that saw birth in the 1840s. Section two is devoted to explore the play’s textualization of 1950s American society under the McCarthyist *regime*. Section three contains a comparative biography which further illuminates the context and the interpretation of the works in question by revealing the authors’ position towards the prevailing ideologies in their respective societies. In addition, it aims at exposing the extent of the similarity in the authors’ ideas and stance concerning social repression and revolutionary attitudes.

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<sup>11</sup> Frank Lentricchia, “Foucault’s Legacy: A New Historicism?” In Aram Veaser, ed. *The New Historicism* (New York: Routledge, 1989), p.234.

## 1. American Feminism and *The Scarlet Letter*: identification or detachment

Hawthorne wrote his masterpiece *The Scarlet Letter* during a period when the American society was undergoing significant ideological changes due to the flourishing of several movements, notably Transcendentalism, Abolitionism, and Feminism. However, several critics tend to place the work within the Feminist Movement and the context of women's struggle for emancipation and rights. For instance, Leland S. Person argues that: "It is hard to imagine *The Scarlet Letter* not entering into a conversation with 19<sup>th</sup> C Feminism."<sup>12</sup> Similarly, Larzer Ziff in his "Sexual Insight and Social Criticism" refers to the author's rendering of the realities of his period commenting:

Although he did return to a remote period, that setting was not a fairy land in which his imagination could have free reign. It was rather a region half way between the actual and the imaginary which permitted him to soften the obduracy of the former with the play of the latter while anchoring that play with recognizable if distanced reality.<sup>13</sup>

Ziff's words 'to soften the obduracy' of the actual places the romance within the America of the 1840s. However, we may question this 'softening' that L. Ziff claims the novel carries as well as the *nature* of this 'conversation'-- that L. Person refers to -- when considering the writer's reserved attitude towards the Feminist Movement and women intellectuals in his time. In other words, the author's reserved stance on the one hand and his choice and 'glorification' of a rebellious female protagonist on the other seem to place *The Scarlet Letter* in a puzzling position as far as American feminism is concerned. In this respect, this section points towards uncovering the novel's textualization of its period, its concerns, and its paradoxes. More importantly, the aim is to find out the discourses carried in the work in relation to the feminist movement of the 1840s and the dominating patriarchal culture. Historical works on the status and situation of women during the antebellum years expose paradoxes between the new preached ideal of gender equality and the patriarchal ideology of separate spheres that was prevalent in the contemporary culture of the society. Juxtaposing some of these

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<sup>12</sup> Leland S. Person, *The Cambridge Introduction to Nathaniel Hawthorne* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 23.

<sup>13</sup> Larzer Ziff, "Sexual Insight and Social Criticism," In Larzer Ziff, ed. *Literary Democracy: The Declaration of Cultural Independence in America* (New York: The Viking Press, 1981), p. 130.

historical documents with *The Scarlet Letter* reveals that the latter offers an *ambivalent* textualization. In other words, the novel defends feminism while in other instances it promotes patriarchy.

### 1.1. Feminist Implications

In his study of American clerical relations, Karin E. Gedge claims that clergy men and women enjoyed a close intimate relationship.<sup>14</sup> Women in the 1840s often saw their pastors as a source of advice, help, strength, and guidance. Thus, presenting the male hero as a minister who is involved in a sexual relationship with his parishioner shows that *The Scarlet Letter* is deeply immersed in 1840s American society.<sup>15</sup> Although the novel has one chapter entitled ‘The Pastor and His Parishioner’, which highlights the relation between the two central characters, the inversion of the relationship and the contrast between the two characters is apparent throughout the whole work. In other words, the contrast in the representation of the two characters, Hester, the parishioner, and Dimmesdale, the pastor, is an inversion of nineteenth-century gender stereotypes in the Pastoral relationship. Dimmesdale, Hawthorne’s male character, appears as a weak sufferer who invokes readers’ pity while Hester, the female character, shows strength, bravery, and independence. In “A Flood of Sunshine,” it is Hester who takes charge of the situation, takes decisions to leave Boston, and informs her lover of the plans. Her superiority is clearly set against the submissiveness and weakness of Dimmesdale who assumes the passive and inferior role attributed to women in the 1840s. In the forest scene, her strength is opposed to his weakness. Tortured by his guilt and unable even to think, Dimmesdale pleads: “Think for me, Hester! Thou art strong. Resolve for me.” (*The Scarlet Letter*, p.167). Hawthorne’s inversion of the gender roles can, thus, be interpreted as an identification with the feminist movement, especially when considering the moral hypocrisy with which he taints his male hero, the minister Dimmesdale. More clearly,

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<sup>14</sup> Karin E. Gedge, *Without Benefit of Clergy: Women and the Pastoral Relationship in Nineteenth-Century American Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 79.

<sup>15</sup> The intimate relationship between women and their pastors is, in fact, a subject injected in many English works as well. For instance, in Elizabeth Inchbald’s *A Simple Story* (1791), the protagonist Miss Milner is involved in a close relationship with her guardian Dorriforth who is a Roman Catholic priest. See also Charles Reade’s *Griffith Gaunt, or Jealousy* (1866).

as a clergyman, Dimmesdale displays a moral purity and succeeds in deflecting people's suspicion. A comparison between how the Puritans reacted to the sinfulness of both characters is worth mentioning and quite telling of the privilege granted to the male pastor and the prejudices held against the woman Hester. While both committed the same sin, readers may notice how the Puritans are ready to condemn and punish Hester while they are unable to recognize and admit their minister's guilt and transgression despite his confession. Dimmesdale is neither scorned nor punished, at least by any man-made law. Another element that adds to the negative portrayal and weakness of Dimmesdale is related to his relationship with his daughter Pearl as he is unable (or perhaps refuses) to claim and perform his paternal duties and responsibilities towards his biological daughter. In other words, he deprives his daughter of holding his name and even evades all financial engagements towards her. By the close of the story, we learn that it is Chillingworth's fortune, not Dimmesdale's, which Pearl inherits.

In addition to Dimmesdale, Chillingworth is another distorted male character in the novel. He provides a reversed representation of nineteenth-century 'wronged' husbands. In the 1840s, the practices of the law institution indicated that the culture was still promoting and perpetuating patriarchy. In fact, men who were wronged by their wives were encouraged to kill their wives' lovers and even their wives without being counted guilty in courts. Rather, they were presented as 'involuntary agents of God'.<sup>16</sup> In the novel, this imagery is reversed.<sup>17</sup> Chillingworth stands for the husband who is wronged by his wife, but unlike the 1840s, Hawthorne presents him as a demonic figure possessed by devilish features which are fed by his craving for revenge. His vengeful nature and hypocrisy are accompanied with physical ugliness. In several instances he is described as "Satan's emissary", "the diabolical agent", or "the Black man". Considering this, Hawthorne's portrayal of Hester's husband, Chillingworth, can be viewed as the author's dissatisfaction' with what appeared to be a Puritan remnant in the New Republic. Furthermore, the novel offers the two

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<sup>16</sup> Hendrick Hartog, "Lawyering Husbands' Rights, and 'the Unwritten Law' in Nineteenth Century America," *Journal of American History*, Vol. 84, N°.1, (1997), pp 67-68.

<sup>17</sup> Thomas Brook, "Love and Politics, Sympathy and Justice in *The Scarlet Letter*," In Richard Millington, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Nathaniel Hawthorne* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 172.

conflicting views of marital relationship that characterized the 1840s. Indeed, while Hester and Chillingworth's marriage represents the old Puritan view of marriage, Hester and Dimmesdale stand for the new type of marriage that was based on love and sympathy rather than obedience and loyalty.<sup>18</sup> Although both relations fail, Hawthorne's support to Hester and Dimmesdale can be viewed as his non-acceptance of the patriarchal view of marriage and his negative portrayal of Chillingworth as a dissatisfaction with the practices of the legal system in his time. In the romance, Dimmesdale is presented as the 'weak' pastor while Chillingworth as the 'demonized' wronged husband. Considering this, Hawthorne's work seems to eventually promote feminism. Nevertheless, Hawthorne's feminism is, or proves to be, a *surface feminism* regarding Nancy K. Miller's and Mary Ellmann's belief in the impossibility of a true and pure representation of women in Male authors' works as a result of the sexist culture in which male authors live and in which their works are grounded. Feminist theorists insist on the fact that male authors cannot live the female experience and cannot completely distance themselves from these socially constructed gendered conceptions. Therefore, men writers produce what Mary Ellmann refers to as phallic writing<sup>19</sup> in reference to the sexist vocabulary and gender stereotypes in their works. Despite his glorification of the female character Hester Prynne and his sensitiveness to women's conditions, the artist Hawthorne cannot detach himself fully from Hawthorne *the man* who lived in the 1840s. In fact, his representation of the female characters, notably the protagonist, contains implications of patriarchy.

## **1.2. Patriarchal Assumptions**

### **Hester Prynne: A Distorted Image of Womanhood and Motherhood**

A witch, an elfish child, and an adulteress are the realities of Hawthorne's female characters: Mistress Hibbins, Pearl, and Hester. No character seems to escape Hawthorne's cynical touch; however his portrayal of the female heroine provides an

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p. 167.

<sup>19</sup> Mary Ellmann, *Thinking About Women* (Harcourt: Brace and World, 1968), p. 65. This reservation in including men in Feminist concerns is held in feminist criticism by male theorists as Cary Nelson and Stephen Heath who see men's participation in feminist Criticism as producing useless contributions. For further reading, see Cary Nelson's "Men, Feminism, and the materiality of Discourse" in *Men in Feminism* (1987) and Stephen Heath's "Male Feminism?" in Mary Eagleton's *Feminist Literary Criticism* (1991).

ambivalent case. Although she is a rebel, an independent woman, and above all possesses both economic and intellectual positions that no other woman in her time had or 'dared' to develop, the portrayal of Hester bears unfavorable assumptions.

Along the story, Hester is glorified even in the very moments when she is exposing her sinfulness to the public. The author appears to *defend* feminism by presenting his protagonist as a woman who is economically independent at a time when women were placed solely within the domestic realm. In the 1840s, the American view of women was still to a far extent Puritanical. Indeed, the equality of the sexes during Hawthorne's time was based on the notion that placed women in a subordinate position in relation to outward concerns.<sup>20</sup> In the novel, deprived of social contact and help, Hester relies on the art of her hands to earn a living for herself and her baby. By acting as such, she breaks the norms of her patriarchal society and achieves economic independence. Besides, Hawthorne's glorification of his rebellious female protagonist appears in endowing her with a capacity to speculate which allows her to act as a counselor in a masculine-oriented society, a position forbidden to women let alone sinners. By endowing Hester with intellectual capacities, Hawthorne echoes a real historical figure: Margaret Fuller, the mid-nineteenth century campaigner for the rights of women. In *An American Romantic Life: The Private Years*, Charles Capper describes Margaret Fuller as "A seemingly ubiquitous modern American intellectual figure [...] and an avant-garde thinker."<sup>21</sup> Besides, Fuller's challenge to the feminine-masculine dichotomy on which the gender culture of her time was based and her "untrammelled exercise of critical judgment and the thinking of her own thoughts instead of accepting those of other people"<sup>22</sup> are all injected in the character Hester Prynne.

Nevertheless, the novelist's glorification of his female protagonist ponders skepticism and questionings when considering that he underestimated women thinkers and writers

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<sup>20</sup> Catherine Beecher, *A Treatise on Domestic Economy* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1845), pp. 27-28. Beecher here perceives that the inferior status assumed by women in civil and political concerns is due to the difference, both physical and moral, between the two sexes; hence she sees that this status promotes democratic principles in the society.

<sup>21</sup> Charles Capper, *Margaret Fuller: An American Romantic Life: The Private Years, Vol. 1* (1992) (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. x.

<sup>22</sup> Julia Ward Howe, *Margaret Fuller* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1883), pp. 32-33.

in his time. His famous expression ‘a mob of scribblers’ best reveals his critical and reserved stand towards the feminist movement. This patriarchal stance seems to appear in his portrayal of the female protagonist as well, therefore, undermining the entire glorification with which he embroiders her. Indeed, Hester Prynne is presented as a woman devoid of femininity:

There seemed to be no longer anything in Hester’s face for Love to dwell upon; nothing in Hester’s form, though majestic and status-like, that Passion would ever dream of clasping in its embrace, nothing in Hester’s bosom to make her again the pillow of Affection. Some attribute had departed from her, the permanence of which had been essential to keep her a woman. (*The Scarlet Letter*, p.139)

Although Shari Benstock sees in the unsexing of Hester an indication of strength, that is, a result of sapping the phallic power invested in her lover and husband,<sup>23</sup> still this ‘unsexing’ can be viewed as the price that Hester pays for attempting to undermine patriarchal norms and to penetrate a masculine office. In other words, Hawthorne unsexes Hester in turn for her effort to establish herself as an intellectually and economically independent woman. Readers may well notice that Hester, who is no longer a woman throughout the story, is *made* a woman again only and solely in the presence of Dimmesdale, the man. In fact, the forest encounter is the exclusive moment in which Hester restores her femininity, beauty, womanhood, and the very essence of herself: “Her sex, her youth, and the whole richness of her beauty, came back from what men call the irrevocable past, and clustered themselves, with her maiden hope and a happiness before unknown” (*The Scarlet Letter*, p.173). Therefore, making Hester restore temporarily her womanhood in the presence, and for the sake, of Dimmesdale, holds patriarchal assumptions about women’s dependence on men. In a similar vein, after the forest meeting in which Hester tries to advise her lover to forget his sin, to make a new identity, and to flee together, Dimmesdale returns to the village quite different. In “The Minister in a Maze”, the narrator highlights Dimmesdale’s unaccustomed, wicked, and strangely inadequate behavior while walking back to the village. Dimmesdale’s changed state of mind is anticipated in “A

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<sup>23</sup> Shari Benstock, “*The Scarlet letter* (a)dorée, or the female body embroidered” In Ross C. Murfin, ed. *Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism: Nathaniel Hawthorne The Scarlet Letter* (New York: Bedford/ St.Martin’s, 2006), p.405.

Flood of Sunshine”. In fact, as he agrees with Hester’s plans, Dimmesdale begins to feel different:

The decision once made, a glow of strange enjoyment threw its flickering brightness over the trouble of his breast. It was the exhilarating effect—upon a prisoner just escaped from the dungeon of his own heart—of breathing the wild, free atmosphere of an unredeemed, unchristianized, lawless region. (*The Scarlet Letter*, p.172.)

Describing Dimmesdale’s feeling as ‘wild, unchristianized, and lawless’ serves as a warning and a prediction to the corrupt shift in Dimmesdale’s mental state that readers witness later in “The Minister in a Maze.” More importantly, by making Dimmesdale undergo this change the moment ‘the decision [was] made,’ the narrator identifies Hester as the source of this ‘degenerate’ transformation, hence, he suggests the danger of female sexuality and temptation on men.

Additionally, Hester is not only deprived of her womanly qualities but also and eventually, of her motherhood. Mary Wearn in her “No More the Pillow of Affection,” refers to Hester’s lack of maternal instincts and failure in her Motherhood<sup>24</sup> as she provides instances and illustrations of Hester’s cruel treatment and unaffectionate behavior which are irrelevant and antithetic to maternal feelings. Along the same line, although the narrator reverses the Puritan ‘coverture laws’<sup>25</sup> by ‘granting’ Hester custody rights, which were first introduced in the author’s time, the disabilities connected to Hester because of her situation as a single mother are carried on throughout the work. More clearly, it seems quite logical to attribute the portrayal of Pearl as an elf child to her state as a fruit of sin; nevertheless, Pearl’s condition has, as well, a direct link with Hester’s situation as a single mother. While observing Hester and her daughter, Chillingworth comments about Pearl that:

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<sup>24</sup>Mary M. Wearn, *Negotiating Motherhood in Nineteenth Century American Literature* (New York: Routledge, 2008), p.50.

<sup>25</sup>The coverture is a legal doctrine that concerned women and marital laws that were applied in the U.S from the 18<sup>th</sup> C to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> C. See: William Blackstone’s *Commentaries on the Laws of England*. In *Women and Religion in Early America 1600-1850* (1999), Marilyn Westerkamp shows how the coverture was founded upon marital unity and male superiority. The legal personhood of a woman was completely subsumed under her husband’s identity.

There is no law, no reverence for authority, no regard for human ordinances or opinions, right or wrong, mixed up with that child's composition [...] what, in Heaven's name, is she? Is the imp altogether evil? Hath she affections? Hath she any discoverable principle of being? (*The Scarlet Letter*, p. 113.)

Chillingworth's description of Pearl shows that the latter possesses qualities that resemble her mother's and features that make her a mysterious creature; Pearl is not a normal child. This portrayal might suggest that even motherhood cannot be achieved successfully in the absence of a father. That is, it is because Pearl lacks paternity that she becomes an elf child and inherits her mother's 'undesired' features, notably, no adherence to authority, lack of affection, and the inability to distinguish between right and wrong. Besides, Hester's intellectual speculations and perceptions, which the writer endows her with, are undervalued. In fact, as he provides the steps for a successful feminist change, the narrator states that "a woman never overcomes these problems by any exercise of thought." (*The Scarlet Letter*, p. 141). In this respect, Jamie Barlowe's article "Rereading Women: Hester Prynne-ism and the Scarlet Mob of Scribblers" is quite interesting. More explicitly, the underestimation of Hester's thinking abilities can be perceived as an 'othering' in Hawthorne's novel. Barlowe argues that this othering is not only practiced inside the novel but also outside as it reflects "the fear-based perceptions that women [were] overtaking the academy"<sup>26</sup> Moreover, Barlowe refers to the othering of women's scholarship on *The Scarlet Letter* claiming that:

Mainstream scholarship has assumed ownership of a territory where radical inquiries made by the Other are shunned—where the Other, represented by Hester Prynne, is the subject of the radical inquiry or, more dangerously, resisting the inquiries already in place.<sup>27</sup>

Consequently, Hester's 'feeble' thinking, un-sexed womanhood, and failing motherhood present illustrations of the patriarchal assumptions in the novel, hence, the author's detachment from the feminist movement. Thus, taking the above stated notes into consideration, we may state that *The Scarlet Letter* carries on and promotes in its pages the patriarchal ideology that was prevalent in nineteenth-century American culture. We can further assume that the novel's promotion of a paternal-based

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<sup>26</sup> Jamie Barlowe, "Rereading Women: Hester Prynne-ism and The Scarlet Mob of Scribblers," *American Literary History*, Vol. 9, N°. 2, Oxford University Press, (1997), p. 199

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, p. 201.

discourse and its perpetuation of patriarchy were behind the tremendous success that it offered to the male writer Hawthorne in 1850.

*The Scarlet Letter's* apparent identification with and detachment from the feminist movement resonate in the author's own ambiguous position and raise questions on whether the writer allows his protagonist Hester Prynne to achieve her individualism and freedom within the patriarchal authoritarian society. In other words, the author's ambivalent attitude about Hester's rebellion and her search for selfhood remains a point to be discussed in the remaining part of this research work.

## **2. McCarthyism vs. *The Crucible***

Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* was produced in the 1950s. These were years in which the playwright's nation was engaged in a war in defense of its ideology and values against the Communist threat of the Soviet Union. The Cold War affected the internal stability of the nation as the latter, *believing* in a communist presence within its borders, embarked on a fierce crusade to root out those perceived as communist agents or sympathizers. The policy conducted to investigate this Communist infiltration was called McCarthyism as a reference to Senator Joseph McCarthy. The investigations and hearings conducted by The House on Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) targeted and ruined the reputation of many government officials, businessmen, Hollywood actors and even writers. The playwright, himself subject to investigation, saw the Puritan event of the Salem witch-hunt as the best way to describe this unpleasant episode in the history of his country. His play *The Crucible* came, thus, as an allegorical representation of 1950s America:

It would probably never have occurred to me to write a play about the Salem Witch Trials of 1692, had I not seen some astonishing correspondences with that calamity of America of the late 40s and early 50s. My basic need was to respond to a phenomenon, which with only small exaggeration; one could say, paralyzed a whole generation and in a short time dried up habits of trust and toleration in public discourse.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Steven R. Centola, *Echoes Down The Corridor, Arthur Miller, Collected Essays* (London: Methuen Publishing, 2000), p. 274.

To start the analysis of these *astonishing correspondences*, Richard Hofstadter's work *The Paranoid Style in American Politics* published in 1966 is quite useful. In the first essay of the book entitled the same as the book, Hofstadter uses the term 'Paranoid'<sup>29</sup> to describe a characteristic and tradition in American political discourse of which the anti-communist movement is a manifestation. He explains that this style or mode of politics is featured by a tendency towards '*heated exaggeration, suspicion, and conspiratorial fantasy*' created by and for the interest of only a specific group implying the presence of hidden realities. Considering this, *The Crucible* becomes a strong emblem of its period to a far extent. The paranoid mind, the created enemy, and the realities are all present in Miller's play.

In his essay "The Pseudo-Conservative Revolt," produced in 1953 when the McCarthyist Movement was at its peak, Hofstadter describes the pseudo-conservative citizen, a label he attaches to the American character or mind during the 1950s, as someone who: "[...] believes himself to be living in a world in which he is spied upon, plotted against, betrayed, and very likely destined for total ruin. He feels that his liberties have been arbitrarily and outrageously invaded."<sup>30</sup> Miller embodies this paranoiac mind in the character of Reverend Parris. Indeed, more than any other American character produced in that epoch, Parris is the first character that comes to mind while reading Hofstadter. He is the first character that readers meet in the play as if to prepare readers for and anticipate this sense of paranoia which prevails and sweeps away the quietness of the Salem village. Throughout the play, Parris maintains the conspiracy illusion. Indeed, in Act one, while his daughter Betty lies motionless on her bed, the only thing he fears and expects is that his enemies might take advantage of the fact to drive him out of his pulpit. His fears of losing his status are repeatedly expressed. Besides, he goes on suspecting and accusing other people of creating a faction or a party against him. In Act Three, Parris carries on his conspiratorial fantasies in his attempt to convince Judge Danforth of a conspiracy plotting to overthrow the court (*The Crucible*, Act Three, pp.84-85). The overstated illusion of the presence of threatening enemies and ideologies, that Parris holds and spreads, is

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<sup>29</sup> Richard Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics* (London: Lowe and Brydone Ltd, 1966) ,p.7.

<sup>30</sup> Richard Hofstadter, "The Pseudo-Conservative Revolt," In Richard Hofstadter, op .cit., p. 45.

similar to the illusion of the presence of a communist political threat that swept America in the 1950s. In fact, in his study of the culture of early New England, Richard Godbeer identifies this paranoid mind or tendency as the underlying cause of the witch hysteria. He insists on the presence of a predisposition to blame suffering on external causes and insists that it is this particular characteristic which *caused* New Englanders *to obsess* about external threat. More significantly, in tracing the events of two decades prior to the witch-hunt of 1692, Godbeer reveals that the Salem villagers had already fears and hostility towards the Native Americans and the Quakers<sup>31</sup> and maintains that the witch-hunt “reflected only the fear of outside forces and provided an opportunity to release pent-up fears and to root-out persons who seemed threatening to the community.”<sup>32</sup> In examining the origins of the accused, Richard Godbeer found out that a significant number of the accused were outsiders, that is, they either had Quaker associations or had been captured previously by the Native Americans.<sup>33</sup> In this respect, the communist-hunt of the 1950s provided a further instance of this paranoid mind and obsession about outsiders and explains why the same demonic discourse is used in describing ‘the threat.’

Indeed, another aspect that links Arthur Miller’s America with John Proctor’s Salem is the use of religion in defense of politics or what can be called moralizing politics. Indeed, politics in the 1950s were driven by a widely overblown fear that the American way of life was threatened by a philosophy that was calling for the destruction of democracy and had to be fought. This goal was equated with moral right to give validity to the ‘hunting’ policies and to avoid any opposition.<sup>34</sup> As a result, people had to conform or face punishment in case of deviance because that opposition was eventually equated with ‘diabolism’. In fact, the government to a far extent succeeded in enclosing the American thinking into a mindset which is that of anti-communism. This thought-control was maintained through a discourse which

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<sup>31</sup> Richard Godbeer, *The Devil’s Dominion: Magic and Religion in Early New England* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 198-199.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, p. 204.

<sup>33</sup> Among the accused in the 1692 witch-hunt who had Quaker associations are Rebecca and Francis Nurse and the Proctors whose family included a large number of Quakers. Besides, most of the accused lived close to the Salem town where lived the largest Quaker community.

<sup>34</sup> Thomas P. Adler, “Conscience and Community in *An Enemy of the People* and *The Crucible*,” In C.W.E. Bigsby, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Arthur Miller* (1997) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 96.

demonizes the enemy just the same way ancient enemies like Freemasonry and Catholicism were. Mary Brennan provides a reading of American politics in *Turning Right in the Sixties* in which she stresses how Conservative journals and right-wing authors' participated in inflaming the fear and the paranoia.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, discursive practices in the 1950s strengthened communist presence in the U.S by resorting to a demonic discourse in order to widen the fear and support the 'hunt.' Thus, obsession is not the only element that characterized and linked New England to Modern America, but also the way these enemies were represented. In other words, the diabolic discourse with which Communism was described in the 1950s was already and similarly used against the Quakers, Native American assaults, as well as witchcraft during the seventeenth century. Richard Godbeer examines the works of well-known and prominent ministers, such as Cotton Mather and John Cotton, and reveals that their works described the Quaker doctrine as diabolical.<sup>36</sup> It would be worth mentioning that this diabolic representation of 'the enemy' affected ethnic groups like the Jews during the nineteenth century. In "Demonic Images of the Jew in the Nineteenth Century United States," Robert Rockaway and Arnon Gutfeld examine the demonic representations of the Jew in the political discourse and popular literature of the time which show how the Jew was not only considered different but also as posing a threat to the country.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, this discourse of 'otherness' and of demonizing the enemy seems recurrent throughout American history and it is this particular characteristic -- 'to demonize the enemy' -- especially in the communist crusade, which drove historians and intellectuals, among whom Arthur Miller, to view the American government during that period as theocratic.

In the play, Miller explains how morality is used as a means to support certain political policies against others that run counter:

The necessity of the Devil may become evident as a weapon, a weapon designed and used time and time again in every age to whip men into a surrender to a particular church or church-state. [...] A political policy is equated with moral

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<sup>35</sup> Mary C. Brennan, *Turning Right in the Sixties: the Conservative Capture of the GOP* (North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1995), p. 10.

<sup>36</sup> Richard Godbeer, *op.cit.*, 195.

<sup>37</sup> Robert Rockaway & Arnon Gutfeld, "Demonic Images of the Jew in the Nineteenth Century United States," *American Jewish History*, Vol.89, N° 4 (2001), p.357.

right , and opposition to it with diabolical malevolence. Once such an equation is effectively made, society becomes a congeries of plots and counter plots, and the main role of government changes from that of the arbiter to that of the scourge of God.( *The Crucible*, Act One, p.38)

Miller could have put these notes at the beginning of his play, but he included them right after Hale's entrance because it is with Hale that 'the enemy' is identified and people are categorized into those in favor of and those against the witch-hunt policy. Anyone who refuses to inform about witches must have 'bound himself / herself to the devil's service' while those supporting the trials and informing of witches are considered, in Hale's words, as 'God's instruments to discover the Devil's agents.' (*The Crucible*, Act One, p.48). Thus, the demonic discourse which characterized American politics in the 1950s and the application of religious categories to political actions is clearly present in the play's literary discourse.

Politics in the 1950s were shaped by the right conservatives<sup>38</sup> who gained much power through the anti-communist crusade. The critic Christopher Bigsby describes the world in which John Proctor lives with: "[...] a conformity to a ruling orthodoxy and hence a shared hostility to those who threaten it."<sup>39</sup> If the ruling orthodoxy in 1950s America is represented by the right Conservatives supported by the chief interrogator Joseph McCarthy, then in Miller's play, the category may be associated with those authorities or powerful people in the village; Danforth, Parris, Hale, and the Putnams who support the trials though for different reasons. For example, while Danforth and Hale both believe in the existence of witchcraft, Parris' and Putnam's goal in inflaming the witch-hunt is power. The former wants to save his shaken authority and the latter seeks more material power. However, considering the fact that the right conservatives possessed no power before, and that supporting the anti-communist policies empowered them, shifts the association of the ruling orthodoxy to

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<sup>38</sup> By 'right conservatives', I refer to those right wingers outside the Republican Party structure who worked hand in hand with The Republican Party in the 1950s, hence, promote Conservatism in the political system. Following the Depression, The Republican Party was disabled and divided. The Right Conservatives saw in the communist infiltration a way to weaken the Democratic Party, therefore, pave the way for a Republican ascension which came with the election of Dwight Eisenhower in 1952. Thus, the right conservatives are those who supported the anti- communist policies.

<sup>39</sup> C .W.E Bigsby, *Arthur Miller: A Critical Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p .150.

the girls.<sup>40</sup> An examination of the young girls in the play -- how they possess and manipulate power and the consequences -- will establish them as the suitable representatives of the right conservatives. At the beginning, the girls start to accuse others only to escape punishment for dancing in the forest. In Act One, unable to prove her innocence of witchcraft and pressed by Hale and Parris, Abigail confesses and accuses the slave Tituba in turn. As the play unfolds, the reason behind the accusations becomes no longer protection, but rather power. In fact, once the girls realize the effect of pointing their fingers, they start to use and manipulate this power i.e. to accuse a different category of people. Moreover, the trials enabled the girls, who had absolutely no power in a Puritan patriarchal society, to ascend the social ladder and to shape the whole social structure of the village. For instance, Mary Warren, Proctor's shy and naïve servant, stands up confidently and tells Proctor: "I would have you speak civilly to me from this out [...] I will not be ordered to bed no more, Mr. Proctor! I am eighteen and a woman, however single" (*The Crucible*, Act Two, p.59). Her behavior suggests that she feels important and explains why she carries on collaborating with and working for the court. The reason is that the witch-hunt has given her power and a value which she previously lacked and yearned for. The same applies to Abigail, Proctor's lover, who accuses Elizabeth, Proctor's wife, in order to gain a position which she had constantly desired: to be John Proctor's wife. Eventually, this manipulation of power turns the village upside down and leads to a tremendous chaos.

A close consideration of the way with which the girls manipulate Danforth together with the latter's response, not to say collaboration, further reinforces associating the former with the right conservatives and the latter with the zealous McCarthy. Some historical works tend to describe McCarthy as a scapegoat, as well, used by the right conservatives to pass their plans and pave the way for their return to power. Medford S. Evans, in his book *Blacklisted by History: The Untold Story of Senator Joseph McCarthy and his Fight against America's Enemies*, reverses the conventional unpleasant image of Joseph McCarthy as presented by history and

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<sup>40</sup> Most of the accusers in the Salem event of 1692 were teenage girls, who confessed their fabrication of the charges by the end 1692 upon which the court issued a general pardon. See Alden Vaughan, *The Puritan Tradition in America, 1620-1730* (1997).

clarifies how the Republicans censured and criticized him only after their recapture of the White House in 1952.<sup>41</sup> In this case, Joseph McCarthy is viewed as an exploited senator used by the republicans to pass their plans. The same judgment seems to apply to Judge Danforth in the play who appears as a puppet in the hands of the girls. Shockingly, he believes, follows, and takes decisions on what the girls say and is ironically convinced that “the voice of Heaven is speaking through the children”( *The Crucible*, Act Three, p.81). However, it is important to point out that while McCarthy knew the falseness of the accusations and brought fake proofs, Danforth is a deceived judge, blinded by the girls’ mischief as much as by his own self-righteousness and short-sightedness. His speech is full of irony to suggest misjudgments. Therefore, if Parris becomes a representation of the paranoiac spirit, Judge Danforth is an incarnation of the notorious figure of J. McCarthy. He is another character that evokes the 1950s with its conformity. The trials he conducts and his insistence to extort confession from the accused evoke strongly the HUAC hearings in the 1950s.<sup>42</sup> In both eras, the investigation routines were the same as the accused becomes an informer whose honesty and loyalty can only be proved by naming others. In *The Crucible*, despite his moments of doubt about the deceptions practiced and the threatening rebellion, Danforth feels unable to stop and prefers to proceed because “Postponement now, speaks a floundering on [his] part, reprieve or pardon must cast doubt upon the guilt of them that died till now.” (*The Crucible*, Act Four, p.113). This explains Danforth’s insistence on the play’s protagonist to confess, name names, and sign since Proctor’s confession will stand as strong evidence to prove the validity of the trials, hence his reputation. John Proctor’s refusal to name and collaborate with the court evokes and predicts his creator’s experience in refusing to cooperate with the HUAC in 1956-1957. Indeed, in his testimony, Miller was asked to give names of those who attended Communist meetings with him, yet Miller protested and explained that he could not use the name of another person and bring trouble on him and requested to be asked questions that only concern him:

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<sup>41</sup> Medford S. Evans, *Blacklisted by History: The Untold Story of Senator Joseph McCarthy and his Fight against America’s Enemies* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2007), p.543-544.

<sup>42</sup> Allan M. Winkler, *The Cold War: A History in Documents* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp.46-56.

I will be perfectly frank with you in anything relating to my activities. I take the responsibility for everything I have done, but I cannot take responsibility for another human being. (June 21<sup>st</sup>, 1956.)<sup>43</sup>

The playwright's words echo those uttered by the protagonist of his play John Proctor that he had created years before his testimony. In fact, when Judge Danforth insists that John Proctor provide names of people he 'saw with the Devil,' Proctor cries out: "I speak of my own sins; I cannot judge another. [*crying out with hatred*] I have no tongue for it." (*The Crucible*, Act Four, p. 123).

The attack on people's 'Americanness' in the 1950s by accusing them of being pro-communists resembles the attack on people's religiosity by accusing them of dealing with the Devil. One's loyalty and Americanness could only be proved by accusing others of being 'Un-American' the same way accusing people in the Salem village of signing their names in 'the Black Man's book' becomes the only way to show one's religiosity. These manipulations practiced by the state present a strong link between the two periods, with the issue of Americanness in the 1950s and that of religiosity in 1692 Salem. In the play, everyone who confesses has to accuse or name others as a sign of his spiritual recovery and freedom from the Devil's grasp. Readers may notice how the girls' confessions (Tituba, Mary Warren, Abby, and Betty) were all easily believed whereas Judge Danforth finds it difficult to take, and even discredits, Proctor's confession. The reason is that the latter provides no other names. In response to Proctor's refusal to provide names, Danforth insists: "you have *most certainly* seen some person with the Devil" and adds: "you should rejoice to say it if your soul is *truly purged* of any love for Hell!" Later, Danforth threatens Proctor that if he does not prove his witnesses, he will not be allowed to "live in a *Christian* country". (*The Crucible*, Act Four, p.122. emphasis added in the three quotes). Danforth's words, particularly the emphasized phrases in the cited quotations, reveal quite clearly how proving one's religiosity (Christianity) is linked with or guaranteed only by accusing others of dealing with the Devil, that is, by accusing others of being

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<sup>43</sup> Arthur Miller's Testimony Script: *Investigations of the Unauthorized Use of U.S Passports, Part 4*, Hearings before the Committee on Un-American Activities House of Representatives( 2nd session, U.S (1956),p. 4686.In [www.whsd.k12.pa.us/.../Miller%20-%20Testimony%20](http://www.whsd.k12.pa.us/.../Miller%20-%20Testimony%20), accessed on September, 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013. It is important to point out that Arthur Miller was not a member of the Communist Party, but he had been affiliated from time to time with organizations that were cited as Communist-dominated organizations.

un-religious or un-Christian. The need to name ‘witnesses’ in order to prove religious purification in Salem and to prove loyalty in America during the 1950s poses a problem of evidence since the enemy in both cases was invisible. Because both governments wanted, in Danforth’s words ‘to discover the unseen,’ people were questioned and attacked on their beliefs and thoughts and it was the invisibility of the idea which helped spread the accusing finger and the paranoia, hence the irrationality of the accusations. This explains Danforth’s continuous and ceaseless search for ‘*the proof*’. Paradoxically, his search is an indication of his uncertainty and disbelief in spectral evidence. John Proctor also is in a continuous search for ‘*the proof*,’ yet while the former’s aim is to prove the presence of witchcraft, the purpose of the latter is to prove its inexistence which explains the hostility he faces in his attempt to correct the beliefs of his community.

Since the enemy was, in Miller’s words, an idea, the 1950s were years which witnessed an attack on intellectuals, on those whose job was to examine critically the prevailing assumptions in their society.<sup>44</sup> In the 1950s, conformity dictated an attack on intellectuals and the Academic community by Senator McCarthy violating by so doing the First Amendment to the American Constitution and contradicting the nation’s democratic values. This distrust of intellectuals is what Hofstadter terms: anti-intellectualism:

Intellectuals in the twentieth Century thus have found themselves engaged in incompatible efforts: They have tried to be good and believing citizens of a democratic society and at the same time to resist *vulgarization* of culture which that society constantly produces.<sup>45</sup> (emphasis added)

By ‘the *vulgarization* of culture’, Hofstadter refers to what the government was practicing in order to abridge or even silence the intellectual voice. What the country was afraid of was works the type Miller produced: *The Crucible* with which he unveiled the realities of his time which explains the frustrations he had faced once his most daring and audacious play came out. The playwright had to testify before the HUAC as demonstrated previously, was tried one year suspended sentence for

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<sup>44</sup> Richard Hofstadter, “The 214th Columbia Commencement Address,” *The American Scholar*, Vol. 37, N°. 4, The Phi Beta Kappa Society (1968), pp. 584-585.

<sup>45</sup> Richard Hofstadter, *Anti- intellectualism in American Life* (New York: Vintage books, 1962), pp. 407-408.

contempt of congress, denied his passport, and asked to write less tragically about America. In fact, by the end of Miller's testimony, Mr. Doyle asks Miller to direct his talent to fighting against well-known communist subversive conspiracies in the United States and in the world. Miller restates the aim of his writing and clarifies:

I am not a fictionalist, I reflect what my heart tells me from the society around me. We are living in a time when there is a great uncertainty in this country [...] I am devoted to what is going on. The hardest thing to do is to tell what is going on. It is easy to talk about the past and future, but nobody knows what is happening now.<sup>46</sup>

The same denial of the freedom of speech, thought, and belief manifests itself in several instances in the play. In Act One, the protagonist voices his right to the freedom of speech saying "I may speak my heart" which predicts his insistence on his freedom of belief in the following Act. Indeed, the scene in Act Two provides a striking example of how one's beliefs are tested, hence, his conformity to the system. In this scene, Hale questions and tests the religiosity of the Proctors and their belief in the presence of witches since negating means eventually a denial of the presence of God. Throughout the questioning process, Hale's eagerness and belief in his job is set against Proctor's resentfulness. Indeed, as Hale checks John Proctor's disbelief in witches, the narrator refers to Proctor's "*disgust with Hale and with himself for even answering*" (*The Crucible*, Act Two, pp.62-67). This negation of the freedom of private thought or anti-intellectualism occurs when a social, moral, and political code is imposed. This requires utter conformity and any difference or deviance from this established mode is to be condemned. Everyone who does not conform is viewed as a potential threat to this unity like John Proctor in *The Crucible* and his creator Arthur Miller during the fifties. Thus, intolerance of diverse thinking and of being different is what the play highlights and condemns.

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<sup>46</sup> Arthur Miller's Testimony Script, op. cit, pp. 4686-4690.

### 3. The Sexual Element and the Analogy between the Novel & the Play

If the *The Crucible* is first and foremost a political allegory and *The Scarlet Letter* aims at allegorizing a social concern in the 1840s, then what might be the function of the sexual element and does it reinforce or reduce the analogy aimed at in the works in question?

The presence of the adultery plot in *The Scarlet Letter* links the novel not only with the play in question but also with nineteenth century European works as *O Primo Basilio* and *la Regenta*. Elizabeth Amann studies the recurrent use of the adultery plot in nineteenth-century European literature, notably the rewritings of Gustave Flaubert's novel *Madame Bovary* and seeks to explain their frequent "puzzling" canonization. For Amann, the adultery plot has a symbolic significance and function. She refers to the way the erotic language in these works is mixed with the political speech of the time, thus, she refuses to attribute the plot of woman infidelity to mere reflectionist readings on woman's desire for autonomy. Because the private story is interwoven with the public history, the inclusion of the adultery plot in Flaubert's novel has a rather political interpretation.<sup>47</sup> To some extent Amann's perception applies to *The Scarlet Letter*. In the latter, Hester Prynne is an incarnation of the feminist revolutionary thought of the period as she holds revolutionary ideas on women's position. However, a closer look at the relation between the adultery plot and the revolutionary ideas reveals that it is the product of adultery, Pearl, which does not permit Hester to become what she wishes to be:

Had little Pearl never come to her from the spiritual world, it might have been far otherwise. Then, she might have come down to us in history, hand in hand with Ann Hutchinson, as the foundress of a religious sect. She might in one of her phases, have been a prophetess. (*The Scarlet Letter*, p.140.)

By making Pearl live, Hawthorne impedes and prevents Hester from undermining the Puritan patriarchal establishment. Thus, his refusal to allow Hester to be a radicalist may suggest his desire to distance America from the 'disturbing' revolutionary attempts of his time, particularly the feminist movement.

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<sup>47</sup> Elizabeth Amann, "A Marriage sans Culottes?" In Elizabeth Amann, ed. *Importing Madame Bovary: The Politics of Adultery* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p.93.

Sexual or personal betrayal, a recurrent theme in Arthur Miller's work, proves to be metaphoric of the social betrayal that constituted a mode of social behavior in the 1950s. Despite the belief of some critics of its irrelevance to the analogy, the sexual act does not undermine the analogy, but rather reinforces it. As Hester Prynne, John Proctor endures suffering and his reputation and good name are tainted because of an adulterous act. Stuart Marlow believes that the sexual concern "narrows the focus of *The Crucible's* main project which was to explore thematic links between the Salem witch trials and the HUAC era."<sup>48</sup> However, a consideration of the result of the sexual act rather than the act itself will make the link quite tangible. More explicitly, the connection is guilt. It is the guilt which was present in the 1950s and which could only be expressed through this sexual element. In fact, in "*The Crucible* in History," Arthur Miller refers to the guilt residing in those defendants of socialism or left-wingers which was felt because of their silence against the accusations, the fact that confirmed the conspiracy plot in the public mind. It was the conformity that the country embraced which did not allow them to voice their contempt of the norms of the majority, hence, the feeling of guilt.<sup>49</sup> In the play, Proctor's guilt is indeed the result of his sin and eventually his 'silence' and inability to change the mindset that rules the village. Therefore, what connects John Proctor with the leftists is their silence against the established mode, hence, the feeling of guilt which are themselves the outcome of the imposed conformity. Thus, the sexual act cannot be irrelevant to the analogy, but actually it makes the analogy. If sex is symbolic of social concerns in Hawthorne's novel, in Miller's works sex and politics, the personal and the political are interwoven. The adultery plot, thus, seems to function similarly in the works in question. In other words, it is the consequence of the sexual act, Pearl in Hester's case and guilt in Proctor's, which impedes both protagonists in their challenge to the established mode.

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<sup>48</sup> Stuart Marlow, "Interrogating *The Crucible*: Revisiting the Biographical, Historical and Political Sources in Arthur Miller's Play *The Crucible*" In Harold Bloom, ed. *Bloom's Modern Critical Interpretations: Arthur Miller's The Crucible* (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2008), p. 142.

<sup>49</sup> Arthur Miller, "*The Crucible* in History" In Harold Bloom, op.cit., pp. 96-97.

#### 4. The Novelist and The Playwright: A Comparative Biography

Since they are considered as “the privileged delegates of those who constitute society and culture,”<sup>50</sup> the authors, their lives, principles, and experience become necessary elements if not the starting material needed for the interpretation of literary works. This section serves to highlight some biographical elements of the two writers under study: Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864) and Arthur Miller (1915-2005). It is important to mention that much concern will be devoted to the affinities which may serve to add to the validity of this comparative study and to uncover how the novelist and the playwright, though they belong to distinct periods, could write similar works on similar themes. Much consideration is given, especially, to both authors’ thoughts and positions towards political ideologies, issues on conformism, repression, and revolutionary attitudes. The close connections between the two writers can be revealed through reference to their roots and early experience, beliefs and principles, and finally their sociopolitical thought and activism.

Concerning their roots, both Hawthorne and Miller are descendents of persecuted groups who fled from Europe to America in search of religious freedom, belief, and opportunity. Indeed, Miller’s parents’ families (the Millers and the Barnettes) belonged to the Jewish groups that were persecuted in Poland and ultimately escaped and settled in America. Quite similarly, Hawthorne came of a long line of American Puritans. His ancestors were religious groups who espoused a *purser* form of Protestantism, but unable to endure persecution in England, went to the New World in the seventeenth century. The novelist’s contempt and feeling of shame towards his ancestry are expressed in most of his works as he presents them as symbols of repression and authority. Additionally, both authors as young men, had ideas and practices that challenged the conservatism of their families or the beliefs of their regions. In fact, the Romance writer’s rebellious nature and his dislike of conformity appeared as early as his college years. In a letter to his sister Elizabeth,<sup>51</sup> he expressed his relief when he left Salem Village for the Bowdoin College in Maine

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<sup>50</sup> Elizabeth Genovese, “Literary Criticism and The Politics of the New Historicism,” In Aram Veeseer, op. cit., p. 221.

<sup>51</sup> Joel Myerson, *Selected Letters of Nathaniel Hawthorne* (Ohio: The Ohio State University Press, 2002), p. 31.

because the rules there were less harsh than in Salem. Besides, while still in college he was fond of unlawful occupations. He was indeed punished for breaking the law by playing card games which were then still considered as a prohibited form of entertainment. Similarly, the playwright as well and even more daring than the novelist, stood against the conservatism of his family. In *Bloom's Bio Critiques*, Cookie Lommel states that:

Arthur was developing ideas that were too radical to meet with his conservative immigrant grandparents' approval. He was drawn to the great Russian writers, [...] whose plots revolved around the suffering of characters who have been wronged by society and who in turn break society's laws.<sup>52</sup>

Indeed, an example of his radical behavior concerns his marriage to the Catholic Mary Grace Slattery, his first wife, which cost him long years of separation from his family.

As for their beliefs and principles, both authors equally shared resentment against all forms of authority and repression, hence their production of rebellious characters like Hester Prynne and John Proctor. Hawthorne's early reserved position towards bossy people like his eldest sister and his sister-in-law developed later into strong anti-authority feelings. This explains, for instance, his ambivalent relation to the transcendentalist figure Ralph Waldo Emerson who advocated some kinds of repression and control for ideal human relations. This support of personal liberties shaped his political views to make him "[...] critical of harshly repressed political orders."<sup>53</sup> Quite close to Hawthorne's principles, Miller is as well "a democrat and an ardent champion of human rights" who believed that "human beings [...] have the right to resist any pressure to conform."<sup>54</sup> The restrictions and limitations in his beliefs and activities throughout his artistic career shaped his thinking to a great extent. In fact, his reprimand towards the anti-intellectualism that characterized his country in the mid-twentieth century and his stand against censorship are voiced not only in *The Crucible*, but also in other works like *An Enemy of the People* (1950)-- an adaptation of Henrik Ibsen's -- *A View from the Bridge* (1955), and works by other writers such

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<sup>52</sup> Cookie Lommel, "Biography of Arthur Miller" In Harold Bloom, ed. *Bloom's Bio Critiques: Arthur Miller* (Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 2003), p.13.

<sup>53</sup> Brook Thomas, "Love and Politics, sympathy and Justice in *The Scarlet Letter*" In Richard. H. Millington, op. cit., p.166.

<sup>54</sup> Cookie Lommel, op. cit., p.22.

as Norman Mailer's *The Deer Park* (1950) catch the mood of the McCarthy Era and HUAC attack on Hollywood.

In relation to their sociopolitical thought and activism, ambiguity is what characterizes both authors, Hawthorne to a higher degree, and which triggered the need to look further into their lives. More clearly, while both were, as demonstrated earlier, strong defenders of the individual freedom of choices and critics of repressive forms, paradoxically, they both had socialist tendencies. Miller's embrace of Socialism started during the Depression years of the 1930s. It grew stronger when the government attacked the Federal Theater Project, which Miller was a member of, due to suspicions of Communist influences. Cookie Lommel refers to the paradox between Miller's beliefs and his socialist affiliations:

What is strange and ironic is Miller's true opinion about the ideals of the Communist Party. In his autobiography *Timebends*, he says that American Communists were irrelevant. He did share many ideals of the Marxist Movement, but the artist, as well as the man, was evolving from these positions. What he disliked, perhaps more than the idealism, was the notion that 'power was forbidden to the individual and rightfully belonged to the collective,' he wrote.<sup>55</sup>

As for the novelist whether it is adequate to label Hawthorne a socialist remains uncertain, yet he was like Miller, against Capitalism. More explicitly, he hated, satirized, and criticized in his tales and sketches all manifestations and consequences of the Industrial Capitalism which his country, then a New Republic, was going through.<sup>56</sup> His ambivalence can be traced all along his relation with the sociopolitical movements of his time which makes it a difficult task to determine his position. Theodore T. Munger wrote about Hawthorne in *Atlantic Monthly* in 1904 that: "It is Hawthorne's *peculiarity* that he cannot be identified with any school or thought[....] Socially, he was closely identified with the Transcendental way of thinking, but it found no access to his mind."<sup>57</sup>(emphasis added). Hawthorne's ambivalence includes not only Feminism and Transcendentalism but also slavery. On the one hand, he showed skepticism towards these attempts at reformations and supported more gradual

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid, p .28.

<sup>56</sup> Joel Pfister, "Hawthorne as Cultural Theorist" In Richard H .Millington, op.cit., p.36.

<sup>57</sup> Theodore T. Munger, "Notes on *The Scarlet Letter*," In Gary Scharnhorst, ed. *The Critical Response to The Scarlet Letter* (Michigan: Greenwood Press, 1992), p. 128.

ways in achieving change. On the other hand, he wrote an anti-slavery campaign biography of Franklin Pierce defending the abolitionist ideology. The novelist's reserved attitudes towards the issue of women's rights and his anti-revolutionist ideas raise questions on whether the novel projects his ambivalence, that is, his anti-revolutionism / conservatism or his rebellious nature.

In addition to their similar sociopolitical recluse, the two authors went through close professional experiences as they both lost their jobs on the basis of their political affiliations. Hawthorne, a democrat, was fired from his office in the Salem Custom House when the Whigs won the elections in 1849 upon which he set forth to write and produced *The Scarlet Letter* in 1849. Similarly, Miller's dismissal from his position in the Federal Theater Project and later targeted by the government for his communist affiliations culminated in *The Crucible* in 1953. Besides, the novelist and the playwright had the same view that reforms and changes are necessary for the development of any society. However, they differed about the way these reforms should proceed. Whereas Hawthorne was known, as discussed above, for his support of gradualism, Miller is described by many critics like C.Lommel, as a radicalist.

Although both writers in question share considerable affinities as descendents of persecuted groups, strong advocates of individual liberties, fierce critics of all kinds of authoritative practices, and supporters of reform, the similarity in their treatment of the issues in question is attributed much to the similar historical conditions that surrounded the production of their works, *The Scarlet Letter* and *The Crucible*.

# Chapter Two

## **Authoritarianism and Conformity**

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### Authoritarianism and Conformity

“An individual in a crowd is a grain of sand amid other grains of sand, which the wind stirs up at will”

Gustave le Bon, *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind* (1896)

Much of human behavior is the product of social influences. More clearly, human beings as social beings often look at other people, with whom they identify, as a reference for ‘what should be done or thought of.’ Considering the beliefs, thoughts, or views of other people around us may produce, in a broad sense, what is called conformity. Although this situation unites the individuals and provides them with a social identity and a sense of belonging, it represents under certain circumstances a threat to the individual self. Indeed, this social behavior constitutes a danger to personal liberties, mainly intellectual ones, especially when acted in response to an authoritarian regime or setting. This chapter examines authoritarianism and conformity as literary themes in both the novel and the play in question. This can only be accomplished by first discussing and clarifying the nature of the two concepts through reference to particular works in political psychology and social psychology. After sketching the concepts, the chapter will be divided into three sections. Section one investigates the authoritarian aspect in the American Puritan doctrine and era in order to identify the link or the ‘familiar’ patterns that were evocative of Puritanism in the United States in its antebellum years and later in its modern time. Section two draws attention to the theme of authoritarianism in the works in question through studying the setting. Since the same disciplinary institutions and authoritarian edifices manifest themselves in both works, the analysis is focused on the writers’ depiction of these concrete representations of authoritarian order and power, namely the church, the prison, the court, and the scaffold. The last section examines the theme of conformity in each of the works in question through a study of characterization.

## Sketching the Concepts

### **Authoritarianism**

The latter refers to a political tendency and behavior. It first appeared in the German sociologist and philosopher Theodore W. Adorno's work *The Authoritarian Personality* (1950) to explain personal adherence to fascistic ideologies.<sup>58</sup> The concept was studied later as a group, inter-personal, phenomenon by other researchers as the Canadian Professor of psychology, Robert Altemeyer (1980) who defined the concept as a right-wing tendency with three constructs, namely: conventionalism, submission, and aggression.<sup>59</sup> Another influential study of the concept belongs to John Duckitt, the social psychologist whose definition proves the most adequate to the present research. He perceives authoritarianism as the appropriate relationship between the group and its individual members, thus distinguishing between two extremes: Authoritarianism and Libertarianism. The first one puts the group's cohesion at the expense of individual autonomy whereas the second occurs when the autonomy of the self is set above the group's cohesion. In this case, there can be an authoritarian personality within a libertarian group setting or a libertarian personality within an authoritarian group setting. The last case is the concern of the current research work. Duckitt defines the concept as follows:

The concept of authoritarianism was developed to explain an individual's adherence to anti-democratic, totalitarian, and intolerant ideologies [...] It must be stated that the adherence to anti-democratic or hostile ideologies is not only a matter of personality characteristics, but also depends on the social context. On the one hand, this means that high authoritarians will not automatically react in an authoritarian way in every situation, but that they have the potential to do so. In a given situation, they will react in an authoritarian way if a specific group membership is salient, if they identify strongly with this group and if they perceive a threat to this group.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Theodore Adorno's work was produced by Jewish scholars to explain anti-Semitism in which the authors identified eight traits of the authoritarian personality. However, the approach was later criticized as it studied authoritarianism, which is a collectivist or an intergroup behavior, in terms of individualistic constructs.

<sup>59</sup> Robert B. Altemeyer, *Right-Wing Authoritarianism* (Manitoba: University of Manitoba Press, 1981), pp. 165-167.

<sup>60</sup> John Duckitt, cited in Jost Stellmacher and Thomas Petzel, "Authoritarianism as a Group Phenomenon," *Political Psychology*, Vol. 26, N° 2 (2005), p. 263.

There are two essential elements in Duckitt's formalization of the term / phenomenon that determine and validate our treatment of the concept as a literary theme in the works under study. First, he extends the concept of authoritarian behavior beyond personality to make it cover and identify a social group tendency. Second, in relating this phenomenon to a particular social context, Duckitt presents threat, or salient behavior, as an activating stimulus to the demand for group cohesion at the expense of individual autonomy which explains, therefore, the anti-democratic behavior. In this case, if a member shows a variant or a divergent attitude, the demand for group cohesion is activated and aggressiveness towards the deviant member is enhanced.

The Puritan setting in the works under study presents an illustration and a typical example of an authoritarian group setting and the perverse vision and thoughts of the protagonists of both works, namely Hester Prynne and John Proctor, demonstrate them as libertarians. In the novel, Hester Prynne breaks the Puritan law not solely by her affair with the minister, but also by her socially 'deviant' practices and perverse thoughts. Therefore, she is seen as a potential threat to the patriarchal society and has to be kept away. In the play, witchcraft presents the menacing practice that goes against religion and which John Proctor himself is accused of. Yet witchcraft as well as his adulterous act do not present the only menace as Proctor's thoughts, that differ from and oppose greatly those of his society, constitute a real risk to the norms upon which the cohesion of the Salem society is built. Therefore, because of their non-conformist vision, the protagonists of both works present a threat to the cohesiveness and normative beliefs of the societies in which they live not merely by the sin they commit, but more importantly by their intellectual reclusiveness, hence the hostility, intolerance, and aggressiveness they face. In this case, they are libertarians in an authoritarian society. The aggressiveness that the protagonists face is what Duckitt calls: 'coercive intolerance' which he sets as a characteristic authoritarian quality in addition to 'self-righteous conformity.'<sup>61</sup> Since the latter constitutes an essential aspect of authoritarianism, conformity as a concept needs to be discussed and evaluated.

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<sup>61</sup> John Duckitt, "Authoritarianism and Group Identification: A New View of an Old Construct," *Political Psychology*, Vol. 10, N°. 1, (1989), p. 77.

## Conformity

An authoritarian group setting dictates unquestionable conformity of the members to the group rules, norms, and values. This situation is likely to produce two types of reaction: either to adapt and adjust personal views to those of the group or to stick to private inclinations and resist influence or conformity. In the first case, the individual can conform willingly or he can be converted and influenced by the group while in the second, the individual resists social influence and this rejection places him/her as a social deviant. Conformity, as authoritarianism, is a complex concept and an unstable phenomenon. Conformity is referred to as “Conventionalism” by Robert Altemeyer who identifies it as one of the three components of authoritarianism. He defines the concept as “behavioral and attitudinal conformity with in-group norms and rules.”<sup>62</sup> Yet this view proves insufficient as it leaves the drive behind this behavior undefined and excludes the role of the social group. The term is more profoundly extended by the leading scholar in social psychology Herbert Kelman whose theory of conformity and attitude change is comprehensively used in the treatment of conformity as a theme in the present research work. For Kelman, conformity is an *acceptance* of influence and an agreement to socially accepted conventions.<sup>63</sup> This definition suggests that the group does not *force* directly the individual to conform or behave in a particular way. It indicates, first, that conformity is a voluntary change in one’s behavior to match that of a group standard and, second, that this change is determined by particular personal variations. However, other theories and experiments have emphasized the power of group pressure in changing an individual’s behavior / attitude despite one’s firm conviction of its rightness and adopting that of the group though convinced of its falseness. For instance, the social psychologist Richard Crutchfield (1958)<sup>64</sup> defines the term as yielding to group pressure, therefore emphasizing the power of the group in determining or adjusting one’s opinion, action, or behavior. Consequently, this *acceptance* may vary from an individual to another and from a situation to another.

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<sup>62</sup> Robert Altemeyer, cited in John Duckitt, “Authoritarianism and Group Identification: a New View of an Old Construct,” *Political Psychology*, Vol.10, No.1 (1989), p.71.

<sup>63</sup> Herbert C. Kelman, “Compliance, Identification, and Internalization: Three Processes of Attitude Change,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol.2, No.1 (1958), p.52.

<sup>64</sup> David Krech & Richard S. Crutchfield, *Elements of Psychology* (New York: Knopf Publications, 1958), p.691.

The most influential studies on the types of conformity belong to the social psychologist Leon Mann (1969) and Herbert Kelman. Mann distinguishes between three types of social conformity, namely: normative, informational, and ingratiation. The first case describes a public conformity with a private non-conformity. In the second one, a person conforms to a group when he / she is unsure of his/her own perceptions and looks at the group as a reference. As for the last case, a person conforms to gain social rewards and acceptance.<sup>65</sup> Kelman's personality types are slightly different from Mann's. He distinguishes between *compliance* (normative for Mann), *internalization*: which refers to public and private acceptance of the group norms, and *identification* which happens when a person is attracted to the group and the content of its norms. Since conformity tends to be firstly a personal behavior, our treatment of conformity in both works is achieved through analyzing the characters, their stance, behavior, and action in relation to all forms of authority and to the norms of the groups with which they identify. This is effected through a comprehensive, but not exclusive, reference to Herbert Kelman's conformity personality types: compliance, internalization, and identification. Further reference to and explanation of the types are integrated along with the analysis. The treatment of the theme through characterization in the works in question reveals the inaccuracies underlying social conformity particularly in an authoritarian setting.

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<sup>65</sup> Leon Mann, cited in Rhiannon N. Turner and Richard J. Grisp, *Essential Social Psychology* (2007) (London: SAGE Publications, 2010), p.219.

## 1. Authoritarianism: A Cursed Remnant of Puritan America?

Puritanism or more precisely, Puritan America is used in both works to analogize two distinct time periods: the American Republic in the 1840s and Modern America of the 1950s. An unaccountable number of American writers have injected Puritanism as the subject or the background of their works. The inclusion of this material in a nineteenth-century novel and later on in a twentieth-century play makes it necessary to turn to that episode and eventually to devote some space to discuss related questions, notably: to what extent can Puritanism be labeled as an ideology that promotes authoritarianism and conformity? Whether this recurrent use of the American Puritan background suggests that the American society has not yet broken away from that murky episode, and finally, what is the nature of this bond that constantly brings writers, Hawthorne and Miller particularly, back to the seventeenth century?

The debate over the relation between the past and the present seems to persist and to constitute a point of interest as much of anxiety for many scholars and theorists. An earlier view dates back to the eighteenth century by the Italian Giambattista Vico who insisted, in his philosophy of history, on the cyclical and repetitive nature of history.<sup>66</sup> This view manifests itself again in Karl Marx's analysis of the historical events in 1850s France. In *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Marx states that some patterns and traditions, which he refers to as 'the spirits of the past', are conjured up continuously in revolutionary periods.<sup>67</sup> For Marx, 'the spirits of the past' are the specific manifestations, policies, slogans, and reactions that continuously appear in and associate with revolutionary crisis. Therefore, Karl Marx's perception maintains a proven link between the past and the present. These repetitions are due to what is referred to as the cyclicity of history which is treated by philosophers and historians through diverse angles. For instance, Vico has a generative view of history

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<sup>66</sup> Giambattista Vico, cited in Paul Hamilton, *Historicism* (New York: Routledge, 1989), p.36. Giambattista Vico suggests a repetitive model of history in claiming that history reproduces itself to the extent that historical phases can mirror those that preceded. These repetitions occur because history has a circular motion in which societies experience flourishing, debasement, and final dissolution. See Giambattista Vico's *The New Science* (1725).

<sup>67</sup> Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1852) (New York: Wilsid Press LLC, 2008), p. 15.

and focuses on the preserving function of these historical recurrences. Marx's point of interest concerns the difference that comes out of every repetitive phase. In analyzing both views, Edward Said draws attention to the nature of this disparity between one version and its repetition i.e, whether this difference enhances or degrades a fact.<sup>68</sup> Although the focus in treating historical repetitiveness differs from a philosopher to another, there is an agreement that certain historical conditions or events produce repeatedly similar patterns throughout history. In relation to the works in question, the reason behind the writer's inclusion of the Puritan background might be the particular connections that the 1840s and the 1950s demonstrated with the American Puritan past. Because their present echoed past conditions and patterns, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Arthur Miller drew upon American Puritan history.

Puritan America was founded in the early seventeenth century by a religious group called Puritan separatists who espoused a stricter form of Protestantism. In their attempt to set forth a congregational form of church governance in England, they brought about their persecution upon which they escaped to the New World. One of their colonies was Massachusetts Bay Colony of which, Boston the setting of *The Scarlet Letter* and Salem the setting of *The Crucible*, were parts. These people related the church to civil power in order to ensure order and avoid any deviance; however, they ended up creating a tyrannical authoritarian system. In fact, harsh legalism, intolerance, and excessive moralism are remarked as typical features of the epoch. Considerable works and researches were and are still devoted to present a more optimistic re-reading of Puritan America. Puritanism, for instance, was presented as an ideology that offered the seeds of the American democratic values. In *Puritan Political Ideas*, Edmund S. Morgan shows how the Puritan rule in New England shaped today's American Politics.<sup>69</sup> Other works, however, tend to draw a separating line between Puritanism, the original doctrine, and the one that developed in New England. Kenneth Murdock in "The Puritan Tradition in American Literature" clarifies that:

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<sup>68</sup> Edward W. Said, *The World, The Text, and The Critic* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983), p.125.

<sup>69</sup> Edmund S. Morgan, *Puritan Political Ideas 1558-1794* (1965) (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2003), p.161. In reference to John Cotton's refusal of a democratic rule in Massachusetts which was suggested by some noblemen and his preference of theology instead, Edmund Morgan explains that the meaning of the words (democracy and theology) was different from the one in use today. See also: Sacvan Bercovitch, *The Puritan Origins of the American Self* (2011).

Puritanism was an expression in a given historical period, of the non-conformist spirit. But Puritanism in New England underwent a swift evolution [...] In other words, the essence of the non-conformist spirit was lost; the later New England Puritans may well be called conformists in the broad sense, and not non-conformists at all.<sup>70</sup>

By highlighting the changes that were brought to the original doctrine of Puritanism, Murdock identifies conformity as a dividing line between Puritanism, the doctrine that saw birth in England, and American Puritanism. This explains the employment of the latter, by particular American writers, as a symbol of social repression and conformity instead of individualism and non-conformity. Therefore, the demand for conformity and the aggressiveness, whether direct or implied, towards diverse thoughts and ideas presented the connecting element or, in Vico's terminology, 'the pattern' that reoccurs in the history of the nation. Both the 1840s and the 1950s demonstrated a similar pattern to the extent that some historical figures and occurrences resembled others that took place in the American Puritan time.

In relation to the 1840s American Republic, the rising feminist movement, women's stand, and Margaret Fuller must have reminded Nathaniel Hawthorne of a similar 'pattern' in the far past. Because the Puritan authoritarian rule preached patriarchy, its history is full of deviants and non-conformists whose philosophies presented a threat to the moral as well as the patriarchal social code. In his construction of the protagonist Hester Prynne, Nathaniel Hawthorne made use of real stories of three Puritan women: Mary Latham (punished in 1644), Hester Grayford (punished in 1688), and last but not least, the Puritan spiritual adviser Ann Hutchinson. The first two women were executed for adultery while the last one was banished from Massachusetts for her religious convictions and preaching which were at odds with the established Puritan clergy.<sup>71</sup> In the novel, Hester is compared to Ann Hutchinson, the woman who penetrated what was then a male office by preaching and providing religious interpretations in meetings attended by both men and women. Because of the

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<sup>70</sup> Kenneth B. Murdock, "The Puritan Tradition in American Literature," In Norman Foerster, ed. *The Re-Interpretation of American Literature* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1959), pp. 90-91. See Stephen Foster, *The Long Argument: English Puritanism and the Shaping of New England Culture 1570-1700* (1991).

<sup>71</sup> Leland S. Person, *The Cambridge Companion to Nathaniel Hawthorne* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 17-19.

theocratic nature of the government, her *different* religious views and social practices (in standing as an outspoken woman) were not considered a mere challenge to ministers but to the authority as a whole.<sup>72</sup> In this respect, what connects the Puritan feminist political leader Ann Hutchinson and the nineteenth-century feminist campaigner Margaret Fuller with the fictional heroine Hester Prynne is their classification as ‘dangerous women’ due to their *different thinking* and intellectual practices which confronted a certain social ideology that elevated patriarchy in their societies. Ann Hutchinson was banished and persecuted because of her diverse thinking and Margaret Fuller received criticism. In fact, *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1845), which was the first major feminist work in the country, was not easily accepted because of the contemporary culture. Although the two figures lived in two distinct centuries and cultures, Ann Hutchinson and Margaret Fuller resemble each other in that their non-conformity and feminist thoughts were equally considered unconventional and daring because they opposed a certain established patriarchal culture. The Romance writer Nathaniel Hawthorne saw in the feminist Margaret Fuller an echo of the Puritan Ann Hutchinson. Both presented the inspirational personalities for his fictional character Hester Prynne.

Considering the mid-twentieth century, the slogans of the communist hunt, the trials, and the uncertainties of the period presented something historically familiar to the playwright Arthur Miller. It would be significant to mention here that Miller’s play *The Crucible* was first titled *Those Familiar Spirits*. The title bears supernatural implications that reflect the play’s mood and the witch-hunt subject and background. However, in declaring the purpose behind his production of the theatrical piece, Miller referred to ‘some astonishing correspondences’ between the conditions that the American society experienced in the 1950s and the special circumstances of the Puritan Salem event of 1692. Consequently, the meaning of the title *Those Familiar*

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<sup>72</sup> Ann Hutchinson (1591-1643) is a symbolic figure of religious freedom in New England. As a strong-minded and a self-taught woman, her personal religious understandings, which culminated in the Antinomian Controversy, were regarded as a destabilizing practice to the orthodox doctrine. She was tried for her religious views which were considered as ‘theological errors’, banished from the colony of Massachusetts and excommunicated from the church. Her persecution was due to the fact that her behavior, ideas and practices were unconventional and trespassed what was allowed to women in the Puritan society. See, Eve LaPlante, *American Jezebel: The Uncommon Life of Ann Hutchinson, the Woman who Defied the Puritans* (2004).

*Spirits* extends to indicate a symbolical reference beyond the supernatural assumptions suggested by the title. In other words, it may refer to the historical ‘familiarities’ between the two historical epochs, being particularly, the demonic discourse that relates to the opposed ‘threatening’ ideology, the enclosed mind-set, the demanded conformity, the paranoia, and the aggression towards different thinking. It may as well refer to resembling figures and stands mainly those conformists supporting the general mode for particular reasons and those non-conformists who stand against the imposed mode and fight for their intellectual liberties. It was indeed the close parallel that connected the two periods that made the playwright perceive the communist hunt as ‘repetitive’ of the seventeenth-century witch-hunt. The ‘hunting’ policy whether of witches or communists is in fact a hunting of diverse thinking or ideas because, in both eras, it was people who refused to collaborate with the government in its ‘hunting’ policy who presented the real threat. The play’s protagonist John Proctor is modeled on a real historical figure. In fact, John Proctor is a sixty-year old farmer who, as records say, was unjustly accused of witchcraft and died with dignity at the scaffold after refusing to confess.

The historical period in which Hawthorne produced *The Scarlet Letter* and the era that gave birth to Miller’s *The Crucible* knew particular conditions that reminded both authors of and took them back to Puritan America. The anti-democratic behavior that is directed at a perceived ‘threatening’ idea constituted the historical pattern that seems to haunt the American society even in its modern time and which eventually, brings forth or produces familiarities throughout its history. Since literary works are cultural products, this circularity or historical repetitiveness is reflected as well in literature. More clearly, because the two historical phases under study (the 1840s and the 1950s) witnessed similar attitudes and cultural circumstances, Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter* and Arthur Miller’s *The Crucible* bear structural, stylistic; and more importantly thematic similarities.

## 2. Authoritarianism in *The Scarlet Letter* and *The Crucible*

Each society has its own set of principles and beliefs, known as the norms, which are agreed upon to indicate what is right and wrong, what is normal and what is not. Insuring a constant conformity to these norms cannot be achieved without an exercise of power or without imposing a certain order, control, and discipline to avoid any deviance. In his social control theory, the French philosopher Michel Foucault refers to the institutional quality or character of social power. The latter works through the social services including administrative systems and disciplinary institutions, such as, the prison and the church.<sup>73</sup> Therefore, ample understanding and treatment of authoritarianism as a theme and how it manifests itself in both the novel and the play under study dictate an analysis of the instruments and institutions that represent the Puritan authoritarian order. The major settings in both works are repressive or disciplinary institutions. Thus, the section shows how the authoritarian beliefs are sustained through the repressive structures presented in both works, notably the church / state, the court, the prison, and the scaffold. It would be important to point out that the emphasis in treating the same settings in the novel is double. That is, the concern is to reveal how these institutions preserve and endorse both authoritarian as well as patriarchal ideologies and notions.

### 2.1. The Meeting House: Church / State

Because the society under study is a Puritan theocratic one, the body that exercises authority and power and that should discipline and control is a combination of church and state. It is a society of “[...] people amongst whom religion and law were almost identical and in whose character both were so thoroughly interfused that the mildest and the severest acts of public discipline were alike made venerable and awful.” (*The Scarlet Letter*, p.42). In fact, there is a tight link between these two governing branches: state and church. They are represented in the novel by Governor Bellingham for the former and the magistrates and clergymen, Reverend Mr. Wilson and Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale representing the latter. The governing rules and norms, or ‘the

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<sup>73</sup> Michel Foucault, cited in Paul Rabinow, *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), p. 58.

general politics' to use Foucault's terminology, in such Puritan society are centered heavily on religion and on the Bible as the source.

Hawthorne's depiction of this doublefold patriarchal authoritarian body discloses an astonishing disparity between the preached norms and reality. The narrator does not offer an insight into the church or the meeting house, yet a whole chapter is devoted to the Governor's house. The latter reflects not only excessive moralism and exaggerated authority, but also hypocrisy. In his profound and thorough study of imagery in the romance, Hyatt Waggoner sees in the magnified and distorted reflection of Hester's badge in the mansion a sign of "an exaggerated consciousness of sin and almost no awareness of goodness."<sup>74</sup> This effect is suggestive of an over consideration of morality and rigidity. However, the narrator never misses the opportunity to show that this building, which is supposed to reflect Puritan principles of simplicity and distaste of life's earthly comforts, is a concrete appalling contradiction to the extent that the portraits representing the forefathers of the Bellingham lineage "...were gazing with harsh and intolerant criticism at the pursuits and enjoyments of living men." (*The Scarlet Letter*, p.88). In fact, the Puritans were very vigorous in all that is related to luxury. In *The Puritan Tradition in America*, Alden Vaughan lists the social restrictions dictated by the Puritan law and shows how plainness and simplicity in attire were required.<sup>75</sup> In addition to the building of government and authority, the governor Bellingham himself indicates moral corruption and materialism. Indeed, the Governor's attire presents a further transgression of these Puritan norms:

[...] the wide circumference of an elaborate ruff beneath his gray beard, in the antiquated fashion of King James' reign, caused his head to look not a little like that of John the Baptist in a charger. The impression made by his aspects, so rigid and severe and frostbitten with more than autumnal age, was hardly in keeping with the appliances of wordly enjoyment wherewith he had evidently done his utmost to surround himself. (*The Scarlet Letter*, p.91.)

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<sup>74</sup> Hyatt H. Waggoner, "The Scarlet Letter," In Charles Feidelson & Paul B. Korb, ed. *Interpretations of American Literature* (1959) (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), p.18.

<sup>75</sup> Alden T. Vaughan, *The Puritan Tradition in America 1620-1730* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1797), pp. 180-181.

Furthermore, the same chapter offers juxtaposition between two scenes providing an additional illustration of hypocrisy. Moreover, the scene that follows the showy exposition of the Governor's house and his extravagant garb shows how Reverend Mr. Wilson questions little Pearl's religiosity and catechism because of what he considers a lavish garb and merry fashion.

The contradictions underlying the church in the novel are equally apparent in the depiction of this authoritarian building in Miller's play *The Crucible*. Although the latter contains little and undetailed descriptions due to the nature and genre of the literary text, Miller skillfully scatters highly suggestive hints and clues sufficient enough to develop a clear and comprehensive idea of the provided settings. Miller's depiction of this authoritarian institution, that is supposed to be an emblem of authority and discipline, demonstrates an unsteady and shaky authority. First, appallingly we are informed that the minister Mr. Parris is someone who has 'many enemies'. It is important to mention here that in 1692 Massachusetts, people were divided between those against autonomy and those in its favor. The latter secured the ordination of Samuel Parris (the real historical figure) as minister of a congregation. Thus, this explains why Parris and his church were a source of conflict within the village in 1692:

In his sermons, Parris translated factional division to a cosmic struggle between the forces of good and evil. Parris made an explicit connection between his enemies and the legions of Hell [...] sectarian as well as political forces threatened Salem village.<sup>76</sup>

This sense of rivalry is reinforced in *The Crucible* by the note that the narrator offers on the Putnams vs. the Nurses feud which shows that the church or the ministry is reduced to a source of political rivalry and greed. Then, readers learn gradually that the meeting house is a place which most people seem to 'boycott' and disregard. Indeed, Act One informs us that the Nurses 'absented themselves from Church in disbelief' and from the conversation between the minister and his niece Abigail, we learn that the Proctors, likewise, have ceased to attend the church for some dishonorable reason

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<sup>76</sup> Richard Godbeer, *The Devil's Dominion: Magic and Religion in Early New England* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p.198.

related to the minister's niece. Thus, this reaction indicates the absence of respect and veneration of the church as well as for the very person that stands for it, Mr. Parris. The latter, as it is the case with the Governor Bellingham in *The Scarlet Letter*, taints this authoritarian body with his materialism, hypocrisy, and pride. Through the conversation in Act One, Reverend Parris' corruption comes to the fore as he complains, shamelessly, about his salary claiming that he is someone "not used to this poverty" (*The Crucible*, Act One, p. 34). Besides, this materialism is suggested in Act Two as the protagonist reveals that the minister exchanged the pewter candlesticks for golden ones (*The Crucible*, Act Two, p. 63). Parris' behavior, therefore, establishes him as a corrupt and a greedy person and explains whence the ministry is dishonored and disrespected.

## 2.2. The Court

The court is another disciplinary institution that demonstrates social control and discipline. In both works, this setting is enveloped with incongruities which suggest the falsities and injustices practiced by this institution. In the novel, the issue raised by the magistrates in "The Governor's Hall" on Hester's guardianship of Pearl offers an insight into an implied court of law. Prior to this 'informal' court in which Hester faces the magistrates, the narrator notes how small affairs during this era were easily transformed into a public matter:

At that epoch of pristine simplicity, however, matters of even slighter public interest, and of far less intrinsic weight, than the welfare of Hester and her child were strangely mixed up with the deliberations of the legislators and acts of state. (*The Scarlet Letter*, p. 85)

Therefore, the idea of excessive authority that appears in the description of the Governor's house seems to taint the court system likewise. The statement indicates misplaced authority and exaggeration, hence the inefficiency with which the Puritan court system handles social issues and disputes. The narrator's statement predicts the failure of the magistrates in their unreasonable attempt to separate mother and daughter. On Hawthorne's handling of the issue of justice in *The Scarlet Letter*, Thomas Brook states that the writer believes that:

Errors of this sort occur in any society ruled by fallible human beings, but they magnify in significance when forms of authority ‘were felt to possess the sacredness of divine institutions’ as they were in the Puritan theocracy of *The Scarlet Letter*. Distrustful of granting civil authority divine sanction, Hawthorne questions the capacity of the magistrates properly to judge Hester.<sup>77</sup>

Therefore, the reason behind the ironical depiction of the court and the magistrates becomes clear. The exaggerated importance that is given to small issues and the injustices practiced by the court are due to the theocratic nature of the system.

In *The Crucible*, ‘the court of law’ is located in a room in the meeting house itself which is an indication of the theocratic regime in which religion and law are intertwined. Furthermore, the person that represents this body, Deputy Governor Danforth, is an incarnation of the righteousness of the system. Indeed, his self-righteousness and unquestionable belief in the norms and values of the village are apparent throughout the course of the trials. He appears ready and quick to believe and set judgments when the presented arguments defend the presence of witchcraft but hesitates when witchcraft is denied. In *The Devil’s Dominion: Magic and Religion in Early New England*, Richard Godbeer presents some court examinations, particularly John Hathorne’s examination of Sarah Good which shows how the judges used ‘leading questions’ in examining the accused and how negative answers were not easily accepted.<sup>78</sup> In the play, these ‘leading questions’ along with threatening statements are, in fact, used by Danforth in questioning Proctor (*The Crucible*, Act Four, pp.122-133) and again in attempting to force Mary Warren to draw back her confession that the girls were only pretending (*The Crucible*, Act Three, pp.103-104). Thus, these manipulations predict the injustices that the court practices against its people. About the court, Danforth tells Proctor that “we burn a hot fire here, it melts down all concealment” (*The Crucible*, Act Three, p.81). This image is highly ironical because readers know well that in reality this court is raising lies and burying down truths. This incongruous aspect is strengthened in Act Four when the court, which is supposed to set order and to which people resort to for protection and justice, becomes instead a feared institution. “The court is feared” are the words that Reverend Hale

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<sup>77</sup> Thomas Brook, “Love and Politics, Sympathy and Justice in *The Scarlet Letter*,” In Richard Millington, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Nathaniel Hawthorne* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 165.

<sup>78</sup> Op. cit., pp. 207-208.

uses to describe and warn Danforth about the increasing public distrust in this disciplinary institution (*The Crucible*, Act Three, p.88). Therefore, the loss of faith and respect in the town's institutions that characterize the church seems to tarnish the court as well because of the injustices practiced there.

### **2.3. The Prison**

The presence of this institution, which stands for control and discipline, further reinforces the authoritarian aspect in the novel and the play. It is an institution with which conformity is ensured and order is established. However the prison in *The Scarlet Letter* and *The Crucible* is depicted as a symbol of *excessive* and *precarious* intolerance and punitiveness.

Excessive intolerance in novel is suggested by the oldness and antiquity of the prison since it is the first necessity the inhabitants of Boston had erected:

The founders of a new colony, whatever Utopia of human virtue and happiness they might originally project, have invariably recognized it among their earliest practical necessities to allot a portion of the virgin soil as a cemetery, and another portion as the site of a prison [...] Certain it is that, some fifteen or twenty years after the settlement of the town, the wooden jail was already marked with weather-stains and other indications of age which gave a yet darker aspect to its beetle-browed and gloomy front. The rust on the ponderous iron-work of its oaken door looked more antique than anything else in the New World. (*The Scarlet Letter*, p. 40)

Ironically, the utopian beliefs held originally by these people are set against the old penal institution. In fact, the prison is presented as a building already worn out when the colony is only fifteen years old because it constituted the first thing the inhabitants had thought of erecting after the cemetery. In the first part of the quotation, the graveyard is associated with the prison both to indicate the strong adherence of this society to law and strictness and to suggest that punishment in such social order, is like death, a fatality and a necessity.

Furthermore, in the description of the door and the carceral system, the narrator offers suggestions of the authoritarian world which readers are about to discover and which Hester has to face alone. The strength and power are felt in phrases like 'the

heavily timbered' and 'the iron spikes'. In addition, the narrator throws a melancholic atmosphere, which may express his own distaste of the system, in phrases like 'ugly edifice' and 'inauspicious portal'. To continue his contemptuous description of the prison, the harshness of this system is juxtaposed with a wild rosebush. The latter is associated with hope, but the narrator warns his readership against being so optimistic when he adds: "...with its delicate gems which might be imagined to offer their fragrance and fragile beauty to the prisoner as he went in" (*The Scarlet Letter*, p. 41). The words, *delicate* and *fragile*, indicate that this hope is short-lived as it is the case with the optimism that readers may develop about Hester's story. The narrator's decision to offer one of these roses to his readers is an anticipation of the cloudy end of Hester's tale. More plainly, as the rose is present at the entrance of the prison to give fragile hope to prisoners, so it is found at the beginning of the story to offer a delicate optimism to readers. Similarly, *The Crucible* offers, as well, a dismal depiction of the prison and of the paradoxes connected to it. The beginning of Act Four, which takes place in prison, contains instances which show how laws are broken openly. Moreover, Mr. Marshal Herrick, who has served already as an agent working for the court, appears drunk in this scene and Danforth limits himself to giving him a little remark to 'beware hard drink!' Furthermore, this disciplinary institution is supposed to imprison those who stand against the morals and the established values. Paradoxically, those who are well reputed, such as Rebecca, Corey, Proctor, and Elizabeth are put in prison while those hypocrites and greedy people like Parris and the Putnams remain outside free of any suspicion.

The disagreeable and dangerous effects of the prison on the two protagonists Hester Prynne and John Proctor reinforce the idea of exceeding intolerance that is related to this penitentiary institution. In his inquiry of the history as well as the mechanism of prison, Michel Foucault describes the aim of this penal institution as follows:

The overall aim was to make the prison a place for the constitution of a body of knowledge that would regulate the exercise of the penitentiary practice [...] it has to extract unceasingly from the inmate a body of knowledge that will make it possible to transform the penal measure into a penitentiary operation, which will

make of the penalty required by the offense a *modification* of the inmate that will be of use to society.<sup>79</sup>

In this passage, Foucault discusses the purpose of this penal institution as he emphasizes its subsequent productivity in society by its ‘positive’ effect on the inmate. Whether the period that Hester and Proctor spend inside the prison and their sentence prove so, i.e. positive to both of them and to their societies, seem to be critically doubtful regarding the effect of the imprisonment on the protagonists in question. No information is provided on the period Hester had spent in jail (since the story opens with her movement from the prison towards the scaffold), nevertheless, the behavior of Hester in this particular scene contains clues that controvert any possible ‘positive’ effects of the imprisonment on the culprit Hester. In other words, Hester’s imprisonment is supposed to discipline her, yet her reaction while the town beadle was leading her, implies a challenging intention:

He laid his right [hand] upon the shoulder of a young woman, whom he thus drew forward; until, on the threshold of the prison door, she repelled him, by an action marked with natural dignity and force of character, and stepped into the open air, as if by her own free will[...] with a burning blush, and yet a haughty smile and a glance that would not be abashed, [she] looked around at her townspeople and neighbours. (*The Scarlet Letter*, pp.44-45.)

Hester’s behavior in rebuffing the beadle, her provocative smiles, and displayed dignity reveal that she feels more sinned against than sinning, hence, suggesting and predicting her subsequent resistance to her society. Therefore, the prison in Hester’s case, as her ‘repelling’ gesture denotes, has not reached the aim it is assigned. Hester leaves the prison ‘unmodified’ or perhaps more antagonistic to the social code than she had been before her imprisonment.

In relation to the play’s protagonist John Proctor, it is in this institution that the process of his punishment begins as it is the case with the protagonist of *The Scarlet Letter* Hester Prynne. Although Proctor’s imprisonment is different from Hester’s, the result seems to be much alike. Unlike Hester whose soul is the object of punishment, John Proctor undergoes a rather bodily punishment. From the intimate conversation between John and his wife, readers are indirectly informed that he had been tortured in

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<sup>79</sup> Michel Foucault, cited in Paul Rabinow, opt. cit., p. 218.

prison. This method of punishment, Michel Foucault describes as a feature of the pre-modern period, i.e. before the nineteenth century, in which the body was the major target of penal repression.<sup>80</sup> Thus, the culprit would endure severe physical torture prior to his execution which is exactly what happens to John Proctor. However, the aim for which the torture and imprisonment are set, which is to effect a ‘positive modification’ in the prisoner, ultimately fails. More clearly, John Proctor’s opposition to the system grows instead because the price for his release, which is to confess to a lie, goes against his private principles of decency. Thus, like Hester Prynne, Miller’s protagonist leaves the prison ‘unmodified.’ The analysis of the scaffold, particularly of the reaction of Danforth and Parris to Proctor’s behavior prior to his execution, will be helpful to further understand the reason behind Proctor ‘unmodified’ condition.

#### 2.4. The Scaffold

Present in the novel as the place where the punishment of Hester Prynne begins, the scaffold is depicted as the final destination of John Proctor. Similarly to the court and the prison, the scaffold represents an instrument of authority and discipline. In the novel, it also stands as an emblem of patriarchal authority. The importance of studying this element lies in exposing one of the principal features in authoritarian modes of punishment and discipline that is the public and disclosing the danger of excessive intolerance that is hinted at in the depiction of the prison. Both in Hester’s and Proctor’s societies, the right to watch and punish belongs not only to the state and church authorities but also to the society. Alden Vaughan explains that:

It went also into personal behavior of many kinds, for every sinner threatened the whole society: God’s wrath could be unleashed at communities as well as individuals; the community’s covenant with God made each member responsible for the purity of the whole.<sup>81</sup>

In this case, Michel Foucault’s treatment of the scaffold is a case in point. In *Discipline and Punish*, he points at this penitentiary means as one of the crucial ways of establishing order in the pre-modern era, but the element he emphasizes most is ‘the spectacle of the scaffold’ in which he stresses the importance of *the audience* in such

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<sup>80</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1977), p.12.

<sup>81</sup> Alden Vaughan, op. cit., p. 180.

public ritual.<sup>82</sup> This idea is heavily suggested in the romance in the word ‘*throng*’ which comes at the very beginning of the story to establish *the public* as a determining agent in Hester’s struggle. Besides, this raised stage for killing criminals is located at the Market Place, a place where people gather and which is positioned at the center of public interest and attention. Because the culprit is a woman, most of the spectators are women who, indeed, participate in punishing Hester. A patriarchal society like that of Boston seems to make women even harsher and less tolerant to their kind. In fact, the narrator highlights the severe wishes and the dissatisfaction of the Puritan women with what they consider a ‘soft’ judgment. More significantly, the patriarchy characterizing the society in Boston is suggested in the public’s conflicting reaction towards Hester’s and Dimmesdale’s sinfulness. Although both committed the same sin, the public seems to divert its attention off Dimmesdale and to exceed in punishing Hester. After Dimmesdale’s public confession and exposition of the letter ‘A’ on his chest, the narrator informs us that the villagers have attributed his unexpected confession to other reasons. This behavior shows that the populace refuses to take the confession seriously and to acknowledge the sinfulness of the minister. The narrator explains in “The Minister in a Maze” that the “error would have been their [people’s] own, not his” to add later as the story arks to its end:

We must be allowed to consider this version of Mr. Dimmesdale’s story as only an instance of that stubborn fidelity with which a *man’s* friends--and especially a clergyman’s--will sometimes uphold his character, when proofs, clear as the mid-day sunshine on the scarlet letter, establish him a false and sin-stained creature of the dust. (*The Scarlet Letter*, p.220, emphasis added)

The narrator here indicates how the patriarchal order or the paternal orientations of the Boston society are behind the *coverage* and *protection* that the sinful minister is privileged with when cloudless proof is provided. Thus, the narrator’s statement identifies the penitentiary institution in *The Scarlet Letter* as highly patriarchal—the point that manifests itself in the description of the scaffold—and explains, thus, the excessiveness practiced in Hester’s punishment. Indeed, the patriarchy underlying the penitentiary system is evident in the description of the scaffold and in Hester’s punishment. The scaffold is the place where the protagonist Hester has to stand, not to

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<sup>82</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*, op. cit., p.109.

be executed as the means is meant for, but as ‘an object of severe and universal observation’ for her shame. The narrator describes the scaffold as follows:

In fact, this scaffold constituted a portion of a penal machine, which now, for two or three generations past, has been merely historical and traditionary among us, but was held, in the old time, to be as effectual an agent in the promotion of good citizenship as ever was the guillotine among the terrorists of France. It was, in short, the platform of the pillory; and above it rose the framework of that instrument of discipline, so fashioned as to confine the human head in its tight grasp, and thus hold it up to the public gaze. The very ideal of ignominy was embodied and made manifest in this contrivance of wood and iron. There can be no outrage, methinks, against our common nature--whatever be the delinquencies of the individual--no outrage more flagrant than to forbid the culprit to hide his face for shame; as it was the essence of this punishment to do. In Hester Prynne’s instance. (*The Scarlet Letter*, p.47.)

The choice of diction in describing this particular instrument reflects the authoritarian order. Indeed, phrases such as ‘instrument of discipline’, ‘tight grasp’, and ‘iron’ are all words that suggest power and authority. Besides, the piece reveals an antagonistic stance towards this means and eventually towards the authoritarian order. This position is expressed, once again, in a series of negative adjectives: ‘ugly engine’, ‘outrage’, ‘flagrant’, and ‘rude market’. More significantly, at the end of the passage the narrator criticizes the essence of this punishing instrument that is “to forbid the culprit to hide his face for shame.” Denouncing this particular characteristic suggests a disapproval of public interference and serves, as well, to highlight the extent of the cruelty in Hester’s punishment since, unlike the executed, Hester faces the public gaze alive. The latter bears warning to the dangers of exceeding intolerance and punishment and anticipates Hester’s insistence in challenging her society and her feeling of being victimized.

The emphasis on the public is as well present in the play in question. In fact, the first scene at the meeting house discloses one of the principles upon which an authoritarian mode of government is constructed, which is the subordination of the individual inclinations and values to the public interest. As it is the case with *the Scarlet Letter*, the importance of the public is established right at the beginning and throughout the play. It is a norm which the protagonist denounces and which he will eventually oppose: “This predilection for minding other people’s business was time-

honoured among the people of Salem, [...] it was also [...] one of the things that a John Proctor would rebel against.” (*The Crucible*, Act One, p.14). Indeed, in New England, little room was left for privacy as “townsfolk were encouraged to watch over their neighbors so that they could report to the local authorities all ‘unseemly carriages.’”<sup>83</sup> In fact, the play opens with a crowd waiting at the meeting house as Abigail informs her uncle that ‘the parlour is packed with people’. The first scene, thus, initiates the public eye and public judgment in the play that are emphasized in other scenes. The scene provided in Act One may serve as a good example when Rebecca scorns Mrs. Putnam’s act in sending her child to conjure up spirits. Mrs. Putnam objects to being judged and asks Rebecca to let God blame her instead (*The Crucible*, Act One, p. 42). Another instance is offered in Act Two as the protagonist John Proctor, tired of his wife’s constant suspicion and unforgiveness, protests: “judge me not” (*The Crucible*, Act Two, p.55.) Furthermore, at the close of the play the public concern is enhanced as the Deputy Governor insists on the village’s right to see John Proctor’s signature and name on the confession. The importance that this society gives to the public eye is set against the protagonist’s protest: “is there no penitence but it be public” (*The Crucible*, Act Four, p.124).

In addition to highlighting the public concern, the scaffold scene in both works presents two different cases or modes of punishment. Michel Foucault, in “The Body of the Condemned”, distinguishes between punishment and execution. The latter being the punishment of the body which relates to the pre-modern period and which concerns the play’s protagonist Proctor while the former is attributed to modern ways of punishment in which the object of torture is no longer the body but the soul, which is Hester’s case. In punishment, the target has become to discipline the soul with other ways:

Punitive practices had become more reticent. One no longer touched the body, or at least as little as possible, and then only to reach something other than the body itself [...] The body now serves as an instrument or intermediary [...] It is in order to deprive the individual of a liberty that is regarded both as a right and as a property. The body according to this penalty is caught up in a system of

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<sup>83</sup> Richard Godbeer, op.cit., pp. 2-5. The author presents the case of Elizabeth Knapp (1671) and demonstrates how a diabolic possession was a communal event.

constraints and privations, obligations and prohibitions. Physical pain, the pain of the body itself, is no longer the constituent element of the penalty. From being an art of unbearable sensations, punishment has become an economy of suspended rights.<sup>84</sup>

In fact, Hester experiences this kind of ‘suspended rights’ and ‘constraints’. She is excluded from society and deprived of all kinds of social contact and interaction except for icy scorns and thorny gazes. She is, as well, obliged to wear a badge of shame on her bosom, and even in the art of her hands, Hester is not allowed to make certain garbs. In addition, Hester’s soul is placed at the center of attention throughout the novel. Whenever Dimmesdale and Wilson refer to her, they constantly use ‘soul’ (*The Scarlet Letter*, pp. 56, 57, 68). Considering this, we may question Hester’s case as she is a character made alive in the Puritan setting of the seventeenth century while the mode with which she is punished is associated with the modern era.<sup>85</sup> This reinforces the suggestion that Hester is an avant-garde woman, the idea that goes hand in hand with her feminist speculations and ideas which are ahead of her time.

Concerning Proctor’s case, Foucault describes public execution as a political and judicial ritual by which injured sovereignty was restored: “it constituted the reply of the sovereignty to those who attacked his will, his law, or his person.”<sup>86</sup> Foucault here asserts that public execution is a way with which order and authority are re-established. However, in *The Crucible* the case is reversed. More explicitly, instead of bringing order and re-establishing the authority (represented by Governor Danforth and Minister Parris), John Proctor’s execution constitutes a threat to it, predicts riots, and the ruin of the authorities. In fact, Parris’s and Danforth’s insistence on Proctor’s confession to avoid execution is due to their fears of people’s rebellion, hence their loss of authority (*The Crucible*, Act Three, pp.120-123). Parris and Danforth both realize that if Proctor, ‘a weighty name,’ is executed, doubts will reach the trials and

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<sup>84</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*, op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>85</sup> In the mid 17<sup>th</sup> C, the setting of *The Scarlet Letter*, Laws addressing adultery in Massachusetts Bay Colony placed death penalty as the punishment. Although revised in 1631, 1638, 1640, and 1647, and in 1648, the punishment remained death. The Colony of New Plymouth was perhaps the only exception in which adultery was punished by whipping after which the sinner was obliged to wear two capital letters: AD as a reference to adulterer or adulteress--cut out in cloth and placed on their garments. Thus, it is the last part of the punishment which Nathaniel Hawthorne made use of in writing his novel *The Scarlet Letter*. See, *The Laws and Liberties of Massachusetts* (1929).

<sup>86</sup> Michel Foucault, cited in, Paul Rabinow, op. cit., p. 260.

their authority will eventually go. John Proctor's confession and life would mean a confirmation of the validity of the trials and eventually the restoration of Parris's position and reputation in the village while his execution means the end of Parris's reputation and status which is, indeed, what happens at the end of the play. The relation between the protagonist's execution and the church / court authority is best revealed in Parris's reaction. First, as Proctor tears the confession, the narrator comments on Parris's hysterical manner while calling Proctor: "...as though the tearing paper were his life." Later, Parris tries in vain to convince John Proctor to change his mind and when Proctor is led to the scaffold, Parris "*rushes out to the door as though to hold back his fate*" (*The Crucible*, Act Four, p.125). The words *life* and *fate* are sufficient to indicate how authority is strongly linked with Proctor's execution and how the former is crushed instead of being restored with the latter's execution. This reversed relation between execution and authority as presented by Miller indicates the dangerous fallacies that disciplinary institutions can carry in an authoritarian setting. These contradictions are, as well, suggestive of misplaced authority which predictive of untrue conformity to such authority.

### **3. Conformity in *The Scarlet Letter* and *The Crucible***

Analyzing the theme of conformity in the works in question through characterization helps to provide a transparent idea about the nature of the relation between the people and the governing institutions. The study uncovers the extent of the response of the characters to the Puritan authoritarian beliefs and highlights as well the dangers of conforming to authority unquestioningly. In other words, this section demonstrates how imposing conformity can divert the public mind from what is right and inhibits the social group from correcting those wrong beliefs because any difference is counted a transgression to authority. As a consequence, people can show outer conformity while hiding an inner disagreement with the general mindset that is imposed by the authorities. Although there is a considerable closeness in the writers' portrayal of their characters, the study of the characters in the works under study will be done successively, that is, in *The Scarlet Letter* then in *The Crucible*. Characters are

analyzed, mainly, through reference to Herbert Kelman's conformity personality types of compliance, identification, and internalization.

### **3.1. Conformity in *The Scarlet Letter***

#### **3.1.1. Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale**

Dimmesdale is the central male character in the novel. He represents the unexposed co-sinner, a young clergyman who is known for his sympathy, kindness, and his possession of 'the Tongue of Flame' which is a quality that most of his fellow ministers lack. This character fits Kelman's conformity type of compliance. The latter:

Can be said to occur when an individual accepts influence because he hopes to achieve favorable reaction from another person or group. He adopts the induced behavior not because he believes in its content, but because he expects to gain specific rewards or approval and avoids specific punishments or disapproval by conformity.<sup>87</sup>

In fact, Dimmesdale is a character whose conformity in action is not accompanied with a conformity in belief. On the one hand, he appears as someone who accepts society's right to judge and its judgment and who is expected, as a preacher and representative of authority, to show utter conformity and to punish those non-conformists. His preaching and sermons are loaded with faith and an unquestionable adherence to the Puritan norms of the Boston society. This facet is already established at the beginning of the novel with his 'powerful appeal' when attempting, hypocritically, to force Hester to reveal the name of the co-sinner which is his own. However, this public or outer agreement and identification with the societal norms and rules is a veil that covers a private disagreement, or a disagreement in belief. Indeed, Robert Stanton, for instance, describes Dimmesdale's temperament (philosophy) as introceptive unlike Hester's which is emanative.<sup>88</sup> Thus, he views Dimmesdale's outer behavior, in the scene in which he exhorts Hester to reveal the lover's name, as incongruous to his temperament. Besides, the narrator describes the minister as someone who could have been a 'liberal man' had he not devoted himself to clerical interests and religion. (*The Scarlet Letter*, p.104.) His adherence to what the narrator calls 'liberal views' appears

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<sup>87</sup> Herbert C. Kelman, op. cit., p.53.

<sup>88</sup> Robert Stanton, "The Scarlet Letter as Dialectic of Temperament and Idea", *Studies in The Novel*, Vol.2, N°.4 (1970), p.476.

in the sentence with which Hester is punished and in his defense for her motherly rights which defy or contradict the custody rights during the Puritan period. Nevertheless, although readers may interpret his behavior in defending Hester's motherly right by his situation as the co-sinner, a consideration of the moments in which this character is in isolation suggests that his behavior is not driven by his unfavorable situation, but results much from his private non acceptance of the whole system and the harshness of its laws. More explicitly, in compliance, conformity takes place only under conditions of surveillance from the influencing agent, in this case: the church / state and the public. What Dimmesdale is afraid of are, indeed, social disapproval and exclusion. Therefore, when he is alone, that is, the condition under which he conforms is absent, readers meet a different Dimmesdale. Early, in the Scaffold scene, he is described as "[...] a being who felt himself quite astray and at a loss in the pathway of human existence, and could only be at ease in some seclusion of his own."(*The Scarlet Letter*, p .56). Clearly enough, the young minister seeks the approval of others rather than his own which explains his act in hiding his sin from the public eye. The chapter, which the narrator devotes to the Minister's Vigil, best reveals the extent to which this character values his public reputation over his own authentic self. Even when on the verge of lunacy, he dreads the multitude and refuses his undeclared daughter's request responding: "the daylight of this world shall not see our meeting." Thus, Dimmesdale prefers to continue acting a false role and to suffer rather than confess and gain inner truth.

Furthermore, in "the Interior of a Heart", Dimmedale's false conformity and contradictions to the conventions of the Puritan social group are reinforced. In this chapter, the narrator takes his readers deep into the inside of this character to unveil his falseness, hypocrisy, and to expose the contradiction between the private and the public that resides within this character. The narrator begins with exposing the character's growing fame among his people that he appears to have achieved by his condition as a sinner. In other words, his hidden shame and its burden have made him more sympathetic and more sensitive to human orgies. However, instead of rising high, Dimmesdale degenerates into 'a remorseful hypocrite', and an 'untrue man', the reality which distorts even his moment of confession and truth at the end of the story.

We may sympathize with Dimmesdale throughout his suffering and especially at that very moment, yet the narrator has already warned us that “the minister well knew-the light in which his vague confession would be viewed.”(*The Scarlet Letter*, p.122). In fact, his self-condemnations are read by the public as a mere humbleness of a minister. Considering the Puritan Calvinistic beliefs, the public’s inability to condemn or to acknowledge the sinfulness of their minister can be attributed to the notion of the ‘State of Grace’ that the Puritans believed in.<sup>89</sup> Because the community is unaware of Dimmesdale’s sinful reality, the goodness and the outer spiritual purity that he displays are seen as signs of God’s grace and salvation. Thus, Dimmesdale has succeeded to keep his public reputation intact, but in turn he has lost his very sense of himself. At the end of the confession, the narrator comments that “he had spoken the very truth, and transformed it into the veriest falsehood [...] He loathed his miserable self!” (*The Scarlet Letter*, p. 122).

### 3.1.2. Reverend Mr. Wilson

He is another magistrate who stands for the true authority of the Puritan social order in *The Scarlet Letter*. Unlike Dimmesdale, Mr. Wilson conforms to the rules and norms both publicly and privately, thus he presents an appropriate case for Kelman’s conformity personality type of internalization. This individual accepts the induced behavior “because [its] content is intrinsically rewarding. He adopts the induced behavior because it is congruent with his value system [...] or finds it congenial to his needs.”<sup>90</sup> In the novel, Reverend John Wilson is portrayed as someone who is unkind and less tolerant to human suffering, the features that are compatible with Puritan intolerance and rigidity. In “The Recognition”:

There he stood, with a border of grizzled locks beneath his skullcap, while his gray eyes, accustomed to the shaded light of his study, were winking, like those of Hester’s infant, in the unadulterated sunshine. He looked like the darky engraved portraits which we see prefixed to old volumes of sermons; and had no more right

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<sup>89</sup> Despite their belief in predestination, the Puritans believed that some people are born in a ‘state of grace’ In other words, particular people are endowed with signs of God’s grace which eventually predict or prepare them for their ultimate salvation. For further reading, See Dewey D. Wallace, *Puritans and Predestination: Grace in English Protestant Theology, 1525-1695* (2004).

<sup>90</sup> Herbert C. Kelman, op. cit., p. 53.

than one of those portraits would have, to step forth, as he now did, and meddle with a question of human guilt, passion, and anguish. (*The Scarlet Letter*, p.55.)

In this passage, he is reduced to a darky portrait or to an object that, if it has a function at all, may serve to represent only old values. This comparison suggests that this person does not or should not belong to the time in which he is. The idea is further stressed in the last part of the quotation as he is portrayed as someone deprived of sensitive feeling and passion, thus, he has no right to interfere in Hester's case. Therefore, the Puritan harsh codes, strictness, and intolerance seem to reflect or match the features of his own personality construction and already existing values. Unlike the naturally soft-hearted Dimmesdale, Mr. Wilson is likely to conform both privately and publicly to the Puritan norms because he actually internalizes them. Additionally, considering the conditions under which this type adopts induced response through internalization strengthens the placement of this character within this type. In other words, Herbert Kelman states that this type of conformist conforms under conditions of relevance to the issue regardless of surveillance or salience. In fact, the novel contains no particular parts of Mr. Wilson's inner thoughts, what readers meet throughout the novel is rather an individual who reacts with the same harshness and severity to the different sensitive situations in which he is put. In fact, his deeply reserved stance towards Hester's shame in the scaffold scene appears again in Bellingham's Hall as the magistrates discuss Hester's maternal rights.

### **3.1.3. Roger Chillingworth**

Roger Chillingworth is the protagonist's husband and the second major male character in the novel. Despite the fact that he represents a wronged husband and a victim of treason, he fails to win sympathy either from readers, narrator, the townspeople, and even from his wife who breaks her oath and reveals his identity while she keeps that of her lover secret. He is the only person in the whole novel who views Hester's sentence differently. While others view Hester's punishment as soft, he describes it as 'a wise punishment' which is due to his knowledge of the 'interior'. Chillingworth knows that such punishment is much harsher. This uniqueness and difference in the character's construction establish him as a complicated case in relation to conformity. He can be

placed, nevertheless, within the type of compliance conformity for the following considerations. First, because similarly to his enemy Dimmesdale, Chillingworth pretends to be what he is not. While the former hides his sinful reality because he dreads the public, the latter conceals his true identity to avenge himself. Revenge is, indeed, the element that draws this character in line with the compliant type of conformity. More clearly, according to the Scriptures, revenge is exclusively reserved to God. Yet Chillingworth trespasses the Puritanical religious principle and *allows* himself to do God's job as "Roger Chillingworth, however, was inclined to be hardly, if at all, less satisfied with the aspect of affairs which Providence [...] had substituted for his black devices." (*The Scarlet Letter*, p.118). Therefore, similarly to Dimmesdale, Chillingworth does not totally agree with the Puritan doctrine.

It is, indeed, this revengeful nature which is behind the writer's cynical portrayal of this character. Moreover, because of his mean intention, his spiritual ugliness is accompanied with a physical deformity. This aspect establishes the character as a typical illustration of C. Lombroso's theory of criminality in which physical defects are taken as reflections of a person's 'determined' criminality.<sup>91</sup> Chillingworth's criminal physiology is only hinted at at the beginning; his criminal mind develops in the course of his search for his enemy. In the first part of the novel, particularly in "The Recognition" and "The Interview", we are provided with some information that the so-named Roger Chillingworth is a learned man. In the description, the narrator states that: "there was a remarkable intelligence in his features, as of a person who had so cultivated his mental part that it could not fail to mould the physical to itself, and become manifest by unmistakable tokens" (*The Scarlet Letter*, p. 51). Thus, his physiology, as the statement shows, reflects his situation as a learned and a devoted scholar, but not of a criminal with the exception of one particular feature; Chillingworth's deformed shoulders. The latter is the remarkable sign with which Hester recognizes him in the scaffold scene and which is an anticipation of his consequent spiritual criminality and decay. Therefore, it is gradually that his mental criminality starts to appear fully in his physiology. In fact, as

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<sup>91</sup> Cesare Lombroso, Paul Knepper and Jorgan Stehede, *The Cesare Lombroso's Handbook: Theory of the Born Criminal* (New York: Routledge, 2003), p. 52.

the novel unfolds, this character degenerates into a ‘diabolical agent’, ‘Satan’s emissary’, and a demonic figure to the extent that little Pearl calls him ‘the black man’. Perhaps the most shocking illustration of the degrading effect of his evil intention on his physiology is the image provided in “The Leech and His Patient”. As the physician discovers the seared ‘A’ in the minister’s chest, the narrator comments: “Had a man seen old Roger Chillingworth, at that moment of his ecstasy, he would have had no need to ask how Satan comports himself when a precious human soul is lost to heaven and won into his kingdom” (*The Scarlet Letter*, p.117). In his essay on “the Unpardonable Sin”, James Miller attributes Chillingworth’s final diabolic transformation to his subordination of the intellect to the heart.<sup>92</sup> More clearly, Chillingworth made use of his knowledge and intellectual capacities to attain a devilish end which is revenge. Consequently, he has not only harmed his victim Dimmesdale but he dehumanized himself in the process. The final destination of the character is already hinted at in the first scene when the gazing public, then constituting a severe punishment for Hester, turns out to be a protection to her and ‘a shelter’ the moment when Chillingworth appears. The writer’s disagreeable portrayal of this character may be interpreted as an indication of the discrepancy with which he perceives revenge. Revenge in *The Scarlet Letter* is more sinful than adultery.

#### **3.1.4. The Puritan Women: An Insight into the Crowd Mind**

Since they constitute the majority of the throng in Hester’s public ignominy, the Puritan women stand for the crowd, or the opinion of the crowd, and provide an interesting insight into compliant conformity, the power of group pressure, and crowd psychology.

In his theory of the social group “The Social Identification Model”, the social psychologist John C. Turner explains that psychological group membership and behavior has primarily a cognitive basis rather than interpersonal affection or attraction (the latter suggested by the Social Cohesion Model). In other words, the

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<sup>92</sup> James E. Miller, *Quests Surd and Absurd; essays in American literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), p.210. The author studies this particular feature in most of Hawthorne villains such as Ethan Brand and Rappaccini.

minimal condition for group formation / belongingness is not attraction, but the mere perception of belonging to a particular category. Turner explains:

Awareness of common category membership is the necessary and sufficient condition for individuals to feel themselves to be, and act as, a group [...] Once individuals' common social identification of themselves and others is 'switched on', they tend to perceive themselves and others in terms of that category membership.<sup>93</sup>

In this case, the opinion of the Puritan crowd is epitomized in the group of the women who define themselves as “of mature age and church members in good repute.” This group of Puritan women form, indeed, a group identity because they perceive themselves as belonging to a similar category. Thus, the condition Turner identifies as necessary and sufficient for group identification is present and it is these common qualities between them which explain and lead to their subsequent group behavior and opinion similarity. In the Market Place scene, women's group opinion appears in their scornful insults, disdainful looks, and desire for harsher punishment on Hester Prynne. We can perceive how the opinion / attitude of the first woman is taken up by the other four women. Each woman in the group assigns to herself the opinion of the social group which she has inferred, in turn, from one representative member. (*The Scarlet Letter*, pp. 43-44-46). This behavior is described by Rupert Brown as a 'deindividuation' process which he identifies as a product of identifying with a group or a crowd:

People often take on a new identity in a crowd rather than become anonymous. This follows from Turner's (1982) suggestion about the different components of the self-concept—the personal and the social. In a crowd, people may indeed lose some sense of their personal identity but at the same time they will often adopt a stronger sense of their social identity, as a member of this or that particular group.<sup>94</sup>

Indeed, the group opinion of 'the unkindly visaged' women is an illustration of this strength that results from social identification. However, this united and strong group-held reaction, that appears at the beginning of the story to offer an example of authoritarian aggression and group power, seems to disappear when the crowd is no

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<sup>93</sup> John C. Turner, "Towards a Cognitive Redefinition of the Social Group," In Henri Tajfel, ed. *Social Identity and Intergroup Relations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 27-29

<sup>94</sup> Rupert Brown, *Group Processes: Dynamics within and Between Groups* (1988) (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2000), p. 15.

longer a crowd, but mere individuals. Moreover, when the novel approaches its end, readers are told that the community, more especially women, came to Hester's cottage seeking comfort and counsel. Thus, even the power that their group identification had provided them with in the scaffold scene and deprived them of their conscious personality, vanishes. The narrator informs us that the women that visited Hester came with "wounded, wasted, wronged, misplaced, or erring and sinful passion—or with the dreary burden of a heart unyielded" (*The Scarlet Letter*, p.223). Consequently, the disparity in the behavior of the town's women when constituting a crowd in the beginning and when individuals at the end of the work is highly suggestive of a conformity through compliance and of the power of group / crowd behavior as well. The condemning crowd is in reality no better than Hester.

### **3.2. Conformity in *The Crucible***

The examination of the theme of conformity in the theatrical work is effected through an analysis and an evaluation of the characters and the extent of their conformity and identification with the Puritan group norms. *The Crucible*, a play packed with characters, offers a variety of instances which allow a comprehensive as well as a thorough illustration of the processes of social conformity. The society in which John Proctor lives and against which he rebels is one in which individual and personal inclinations are suppressed at the expense of group cohesion. In the play, whenever the protagonist tries to express his individual thoughts--despite their truthfulness--he is constantly reminded that he lives in a society and that he must abide by its laws. When he criticizes Parris's Hell preaching, the latter tells him: "it is not for you to say what is good for you to hear." (*The Crucible*, Act One, p.35). Later, as he voices his skepticism about Parris's goodness and purity, Reverend Hale warns him saying: "that is not for you to decide." (*The Crucible*, Act Two, p.63). Thus, studying characterization in the play demonstrates the mechanisms of the authoritarian setting and the work's discourse against authoritarianism as well as conformity. In treating the power of the group in converting the individual, the study reveals how coercive conformity can have disastrous effects on the society.

### 3.2.1. Deputy Governor Danforth

Danforth is a character that stands for authority as he represents law in the Salem village. He is portrayed as a typical authoritarian personality and a conformist whose agreement with and submission to the system and norms take the form of internalized conformity. He is someone who accepts wholly, both privately and publicly, the norms of the social group because they are, in Kelman's words, *congruent with his value system*. This appears clearly in his self-righteousness, adherence to the public concern over the private, and his own vision of the world. Indeed, Danforth does not question his own beliefs, judgments, or acts even when provided with strong proof nor can he believe that he is deceived. The speech which he delivers during the trials (*The Crucible*, Act Three, p.85) indicates his firm belief in the righteousness of the Court and its proceedings. Additionally, Danforth's obedience to the Puritan authoritarian principles appears in his placement of the public concern over the private. Unlike Hale who feels remorse, Danforth-- even in his short and swift moments of doubt --cares solely for the village or the public reputation of the court, hence his own. When John Proctor tells him that the girls' accusations are pretentious, the first thing the governor asks about is whether he has given this story in the village. His insistence to expose Proctor's confession to the public eye is one more suggestion that he puts the approval of others over his own. Furthermore, another typically Puritan trait that defines Danforth as an authoritarian personality and explains his unquestionable conformity is his dichotomous vision of people. In other words, in an authoritarian setting, individuals are divided between in-group persons, that is, conformists, and out-group individuals who are those deviants. This character has this tendency to view people in terms of good and bad. This appears in Act Three as Francis Nurse brings a sort of testament signed by ninety-one persons as an evidence of the innocence of his wife Rebecca, Elizabeth Proctor, and Martha Corey.<sup>95</sup> When Francis objects to Danforth's decision to arrest those people for examination, Danforth attempts to convince him explaining:

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<sup>95</sup> Brian Pavlac explains that during the trials of 1692, testimony of and petitions by neighbors to someone's good character were ignored, while gossip and claims of the teenage girls about spirit attacks convinced the court and many spectators. Brian A. Pavlac, op.cit., 141.

No, old man, you have not hurt these people if they are of good conscience. But you must understand, sir, that a person is either with this court or he must be counted against it, there be no road between. This is a sharp time, a precise time—we live no longer in the dusky afternoon when evil mixed itself with good and befuddled the world. (*The Crucible*, Act Three, p.85.)

Nevertheless, his classification as a person with an internalized conformity is undermined when considering the particular conditions under which his conformity occurs. In other words, since witchcraft is “*ipso facto*” or an invisible fact, reliance is on spectral evidence. This lack of concrete information on the issue he is treating narrows down his apparent utter conformity. In this respect, Danforth may serve as an appropriate case to illustrate what Leon Mann calls: ‘informational conformity’. The latter is conformity to a group norm that occurs as a way of gaining information in ambiguous or uncertain situations where people are unsure of their own perceptions.<sup>96</sup> In fact, despite his self-righteousness, Danforth appears confused in particular scenes, and at times, he is even influenced by, and relies on, what others tell him, particularly Mr. Parris.

### **3.2.2. Reverend Mr. Parris**

This character displays a complex and ambiguous case in relation to conformity. He seems to stand between two conformity personality types: compliance and internalization. More clearly, considering his status as a minister of the village, his belief that witchcraft is an abomination against the law, and his support of the trials may place him as an individual who conforms both privately and publicly. In fact, he reacts strongly against the girls’ dancing in the forest and he accepts and supports wholeheartedly the crusade against witchcraft. Additionally, his value of the public, which puts him in accordance with Danforth’s type, exceeds all considerations even when it concerns his own daughter. To Abigail, he shockingly explains: “*my ministry is at stake, my ministry, and perhaps your cousin’s life*” (*The Crucible*, Act One, p.20. emphasis added). Nevertheless, the character embodies other traits that reduce his internalized belief in the system, hence his true conformity. In other words, regarding his real purpose in supporting the trials and his real personal values put into question

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<sup>96</sup> Leon Mann, cited in Rhiannon Turner and Richard Grisp, *Essential Social Psychology* (2007) (London: SAGE Publications, 2010), p.138.

his conformity and situate him as a compliant. Parris conforms outwardly but not inwardly.

Parris' alliance with the court is not driven by his utter belief in its defense of God as much as by the profit he gains. Indeed, the shift in his position towards the witchcraft matter is quite revealing and worth mentioning. In other words, when witchcraft presents a menace to his status, he negates its presence. In the beginning of the play, as he is told to look for unnatural causes for his daughter's sickness, he protests:

No-no. There be no unnatural cause here. Tell him I have sent for Reverend Hale of Beverly, and Mr. Hale will surely confirm that. Let him look to medicine and put out all thought of unnatural causes here. There be none. (*The Crucible*, Act One, p.18)

However, he shifts his position to a strong supporter when witchcraft serves his interests. Parris takes advantage of the trials and the paranoia to get rid of those, like Proctor, who question his authority, know his falseness, thus represent a menace to his status. In the Court, he claims: "We are here, Your Honour, precisely to discover what no one has ever seen." (Act Three, p. 93). Although he is a minister, Parris transgresses and shows little embodiment of the Puritan values. His hypocrisy, materialism, selfishness, pride, and greed are altogether features that dispossess the character of his true Puritan qualities and eventually his true conformity. The real historical figure Samuel Parris was, indeed, involved in a salary conflict with his townspeople as he was paid through individual contributions. Even after his resignation from the Salem church, Parris was again involved in a salary dispute with the villagers in Stow, Massachusetts, where he moved.<sup>97</sup> Therefore, Miller portrays Parris as a character whose outer conformity is merely a process with which he achieves his needs as it is the case with the Putnams who take advantage of the trials and the paranoia to serve their own earthly purposes. In Act Three, Corey presents a disposition to charge the Putnams with having profits by accusing people: "if Jacobs hangs for a witch he forfeit up his property--that is law! And there is none but Putnam with the coin to buy

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<sup>97</sup> Paul Boyer & Stephen Nissenbaum, *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), pp. 77-78.

so great a piece. This man is killing his neighbors for their land!"(*The Crucible*, Act Three, p. 87).

### 3.2.3. Reverend Mr. Hale

Reverend Hale is a minister of Beverly who is called forth to help in the discovery of witchcraft. He is present throughout the four acts which explains his importance in the play. Indeed, the character is an illustration of Herbert Kelman's third type of conformity personality type of identification. The individual in this case:

[...] accepts influence because he wants to establish or maintain a satisfying relationship to another person or a group [...] the individual actually believes in the responses which he adopts through identification, but their specific content is more or less irrelevant. He adopts the induced behavior because it is associated with the desired relationship [...] To the extent to which the power of the influencing agent is based on attractiveness, conformity will tend to take the form of identification.<sup>98</sup>

In fact, Hale appears excited and attracted by the whole matter of discovering witchcraft. He comes to the Salem village not merely as a minister but as an intellectual whose knowledge will be at last used. This explains why his conformity soon disappears as his own enthusiasm towards the whole matter diminishes. The narrator describes him as follows:

Reverend Hale conceives of himself much as a young doctor on his first call. His painfully acquired armoury of symptoms, catchwords, and diagnostic procedures are now to be put to use at last [...] He feels himself allied with the best minds of Europe--kings, philosophers, scientists, and ecclesiasts of all churches. (*The Crucible*, Act One, p.40.)

The description reveals the group Hale wishes or desires to identify with and to which the witchcraft matter in Salem is a golden opportunity. Yet once he discovers its falseness and the irrelevance of the path, Hale's attractiveness to and support of the trials gradually vanish. In fact, when John Proctor questions the truthfulness of people's confessions since hanging is the result of denying it, the narrator tells us about Hale that "...it is his own suspicion but he resists it." (Act Two, p. 66). One explanation of his behavior is that his conformity is not based on firm internal acceptance and agreement. Another more profound explanation of Hale's case and

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<sup>98</sup> Herbert C. Kelman, op. cit., pp. 53-54.

‘resisted suspicion’ seems to be found in the American social psychologist Milton Rokeach’s understanding of conformity:

It is a state of mind wherein the person is necessarily psychologically unaware that he cannot distinguish, assess, and act independently on information received from an authority. When in such a state of mind, the person will therefore *rationalize* his beliefs and actions in a way such that he will not expose, to himself or others, his dependency on authority, in order to maintain the illusion that he is an independent, reasonable, and thinking person.<sup>99</sup>

Hale has been called by the authorities to help in detecting witchcraft in the village. In this case, discovering witchcraft, which is his field of profession, is the ‘received information’. Because the latter is internalized and provided by the authorities (and partly because of his enthusiasm as well), Hale is unable to evaluate rationally this information. Although at times he suspects the validity of that information, he will not let his suspicion overcome his illusionary conviction, but instead he rationalizes the belief of an existing witchcraft infiltration. This explains why he *looks* very confident and convinced in what he was doing in the first part of the play. The clues provided by the narrator show his attempt to rationalize the received information. Miller’s portrayal of this character reveals the contradiction between what he really is and what he deludes himself to be. In other words, Hale claims to have knowledge of the invisible world but as the play unfolds, he shows only ignorance. The first unusual matter that puts him under suspicion is his bringing of books with him. In Act Two, his ignorance comes to the fore as he keeps asking Cheever about the significance of puppets and a needle (*The Crucible*, Act Two, pp. 69-70.) Besides, although he knows little about the people of the village, he is assigned to question their religiosity, hence their conformity to the system.

Nevertheless, by the end of Act Three and throughout Act Four, readers meet a different Hale. It is important to point out that historians referred to the changed position of Rev. John Hale in the trials of 1692. For instance, Pavlac notes that Hale participated in the examination and trials, yet within a few years he converted into a

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<sup>99</sup> Milton Rokeach, “Authority, Authoritarianism, and Conformity,” In Irwin August Berg & Bernard M. Bass, ed. *Conformity and Deviation* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1961), p. 247.

critic not merely of the conduct of the trials but also of their purpose.<sup>100</sup> In the play, when the trials reach alarming limits as well-reputed people are targeted, Hale's suppressed disbelief and internal dissatisfaction are released. It is at this point that Hale's illusion disappears and he is finally able to think lucidly on the whole matter. Consequently, this explains his subsequent shift in his stand towards the presence of witchcraft and the court. Hale not only leaves the court, but also tries to convince people "to confess to a lie" to save them because he realizes that "there is blood on [his] head" (*The Crucible*, Act Four, p. 114). In this respect, Hale's case offers an enhancing illustration of the extent to which conformity can lead individuals to *rationalize* the beliefs received from authority in order to look independent and reasonable.

### **3.2.4. The Girls: Compliance and Group Pressure**

If conflicts and sectarian problems were presented as the source behind the witch-hunt of 1692, then the Puritan girls in 1692 were the primary moving force of the hunt.<sup>101</sup> In the play, their conformity may to an extent suit compliance -- a public belief with a private disbelief — because similarly to Parris and the Putnams, the content of the witchcraft paranoia appears a rewarding solution to their problems. It is exactly what the Puritan girls, who have absolutely no right but "to be thankful for being permitted to walk straight", need not only in order to deflect blame and escape punishment, but also to rule the village no matter how disastrous it will be. Abby, the protagonist's lover, uses the trials to cast aside John Proctor's wife Elizabeth. Tituba confesses and accuses others to escape her own punishment as do Betty, Mercy Lewis, and Mary Warren. The latter takes advantage of the trials because she feels important and realizes her self-value. Besides compliance, the girls' case, particularly the confrontation between the girls and Mary Warren, offers a significant instance of social identification, group pressure, conforming behavior and its consequences.

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<sup>100</sup> Brian A, Pavlac, op,cit., p. 142.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid, pp. 138-139. Brian Pavlac demonstrates the historians' views and theories about the factors that led to the unique events of 1692 witch-hunt in America. While Political fears and social tensions are described as the main factors, the author draws attention to the role of the adolescent girls, who enjoyed receiving attention, in agitating the hunt.

## The Girls vs. Mary Warren: Group Pressure

The line-judgment experiments<sup>102</sup> on conformity, which were carried out during the anti-communist era in the USA by the American psychologist and pioneer in social psychology Solomon Asch, further illuminate the study of conformity in the play. In fact, Asch's findings help in the treatment of the element of group pressure and how the individual comes to abandon his / her firmly held belief -- though deeply convinced of its accuracy -- and adopts the majority view despite its falseness. This is exactly what happened in America during the 1950s and which is best expressed through the case of Mary Warren in Miller's play. The latter's case offers a further insight into conformity under group pressure and its dangers. This character is important since her final shift and yielding to the group marks a turning point in the play. Her testimony could have brought the end of the unpleasant situation of the village, yet her conversion leads the protagonist to his tragic destination and contributes to the calamity of the village.

Mary Warren is an appropriate illustration of Asch's findings which demonstrate that if a group whose members believe something to be true when it is false, the person who knows the truth is not likely to correct the dominant view but to conform. This is validated in his experiment as the innocent candidate of the experiment conforms gradually when confederates agree to give different (though evidently false) responses. Solomon Asch describes the naïve candidate's non-verbal behavior as follows:

After the first one or two disagreements, he (the experimenter) would note certain changes in the manner and posture of this person. He would see a look of perplexity, and bewilderment come over this subject's face at the contradicting judgments of the entire group [...] Often he becomes more active; he fidgets in his seat and changes the position of his head to look at the lines from different angles. He may suddenly stand up to look more closely at the card. At other times, he may become especially quiet and immobile.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Solomon Asch's line-judgment conformity experiment consists of a visual test in which the candidates have to indicate which line of the three presented matches the standard line. One of the candidates is naïve while the others are confederates. In the first trials, they all give the correct answer, yet as all the confederates agree on an answer (which is obviously wrong), the naïve participant gradually joins the majority point of view.

<sup>103</sup> Solomon Asch, cited in Jolanda Jetten and Mathew. J Hornsey, "Conformity in Revisiting Asch's line-Judgment Studies," In Joanne R. Smith & Alexander Haslam, ed. *Social Psychology: Revisiting the Classic Studies* (London: SAGE Publications, 2012), p .79.

Mary Warren behaves exactly the same at the sight of the girls' claim that they are bewitched by her spirit. Bewilderment, confusion, uneasiness, and hysterical moments and moments of quietness are all noticed in Mary's behavior as the girls continue acting (*The Crucible*, Act Three, pp. 101-104). At the beginning, convinced and knowing that the girls are only acting on the 'bird' vision, she pleads and protests that "they're sporting!" and that Abby "sees nothin'!" However, as the girls' pressure grows, her gradual conformity to them and to what they claim to see begins. The narrator comments that Mary Warren is "*utterly confounded, and becoming overwhelmed by Abigail's--and the girl's--utter conviction, starts to whimper, hands half raised, powerless*" (*The Crucible*, Act Four, p.102). It is particularly at this point that her submission to the group starts. Although still convinced that what she knows and believes is true and right, she ultimately joins the crowd and conforms. Her conformity, therefore, deprives the court, and the society as a whole, of a valuable information that could have saved both the protagonist and the village. The case of Mary Warren shows that conformity, to abandon one's own judgment and bring one's attitude in line with other people despite utter certainty that the latter is wrong, can eventually lead to destructive consequences. Mary Warren was the sole way for John Proctor, who fails even after tainting his good name, to correct the society's beliefs and to unveil the truths. However, because she submits to the crowd, Mary Warren *helps* the court to carry forward its wrong proceedings and her society to remain in its ignorance.

The chapter has covered the themes of authoritarianism and conformity in the works under study. Both the novel and the play capture all aspects of the authoritarian behavior under threat. The coercive intolerance is indicated in the compelling presence of authoritarian and disciplinary institutions while self-righteous conformity is observed and conveyed through the construction of conformist characters. Treating authoritarianism is accomplished through reference to Michel Foucault's ideas on power and disciplinary institutions. Both works contain similar settings, notably the church, the court, the prison, and the scaffold with the first standing as a sign of religious and political authority and the rest as disciplinary institutions. The analysis shows that both works in question bear a discourse against authoritarian behavior

through highlighting the injustices that the authorities practice when a particular mind-set or thought-control is imposed. In fact, disciplinary institutions are liable to augment people's non-conformity rather than repress it. Additionally, both authors contrast excessive moralism and authority with the hypocrisy that is associated with not only the building / institution but also the people representing it. As far as characterization is concerned, characters in both works are evaluated in relation to their conformity to the Puritan norms and the general mind-set. In the novel and the play, *compliance* is the dominant type of conformity processes. Some characters in *The Scarlet Letter* do resemble to a far extent those Miller constructs in his play. For instance, though different as characters, Dimmesdale's and Parris' way of conforming places them on one scale. Besides, Danforth in *The Crucible* may remind the reader of governor Bellingham of *The Scarlet Letter*. Standing as representatives of authority, their self-righteousness establishes them as conformists with an 'internalized' mode of conformity. Eventually, the chapter helps to give a clear idea of the society and the world in which the two protagonists, Hester Prynne and John Proctor, live and against which they rebel. Therefore, the analysis serves to identify the nature of their dissent or deviation and its destination which constitute the point of focus of the following chapter.

# Chapter Three

## **Resistance in Quest of Individual Authenticity**

## Chapter Three:

### Resistance in Search of Individual Authenticity

“The individual has always had to struggle to keep from being overwhelmed by the tribe. If you try it, you will be lonely often, and sometimes frightened. But no price is too high to pay for the privilege of owning yourself.”

Friedrick Nietzsche

Social resistance is often labeled as an inevitable outcome to a kind of pressure or oppression. Consequently, we often view the rebel as someone whose liberties are denied by a certain powerful group or institution, therefore, we sympathize with the rebellious person, adore the heroic stand, and even hold some firm conviction that this resistance will be fruitful. However, resistance and social dissent seem to mean and function quite differently for Michel Foucault and Stephen Greenblatt who offer a new and a rather “pessimistic” perception. Rather than a relationship of adversity, Foucault places both, the individual’s resistance and society’s power, in a complementary relationship in which resistance is a mechanism through which the power and authority of the society is strengthened rather than weakened or destroyed. Greenblatt, following Foucault’s ideas, questions the notion of a true individual self and denies the existence of a ‘true’ rebel when he states that the individual is a construction of society and that this rebellion, this heroic non-conformist stand, is merely and ultimately a process to conformity.<sup>104</sup> Section one in this chapter highlights the qualities that place Hester Prynne and John Proctor as social dissenters, non-conformists, and as representatives of the American notion of individualism. Section two looks at resistance and non-conformity in the light of the Foucauldian / Greenblattian ideas. The section, thus, investigates what may be called the protagonists’ ‘fake deviance’. Finally, the last section is devoted to evaluate the extent to which their quest for achieving an authentic sense of self within their societies is fruitful, hence their individualism possible.

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<sup>104</sup> Further reference to and explanation of the ideas of Stephen Greenblatt and Michel Foucault are presented in section two in this chapter: Assessing Resistance from a Foucauldian / Greenblattian Angle.

## Introduction to the Concepts

### Individualism § Deviance

Although, as concepts, individualism, non-conformity, deviance, rebellion, and disobedience are dissimilar, they will be used in this chapter interchangeably to describe individual rejection of social authority and pressure. Still a short discussion of the concepts, particularly individualism and deviance, is necessary. A simple definition of individualism would be a way of life by which a person places his / her predilections above the needs of the community. Since the concept is distinctly associated with the American culture, a more precise definition of the term is required. Particular sociological works on American culture, such as Steven Lukes's *Individualism*,<sup>105</sup> tend to ascribe individualism to the myth of the individual who is *isolated* from society and who is morally responsible and autonomous. This mythological / ideological conception of individualism is promoted by the mythology of the Revolution together with the Frontier myth. However, this value of the self was gradually perceived as a source of egotism and materialism. Therefore, other social psychologists have attempted to disclose what appeared to be communitarian aspects in American culture, which seemed to underlie even the very mythological sources and grounds of American individualism. For instance, Eric Mount in his "American Individualism Reconsidered" states that the frontier was not only the area of rugged individualism but also the setting of teamwork and cooperation.<sup>106</sup> This combination of individualistic traits and social tradition in American culture is described as paradoxical in Robin M. Williams' *American Society: A Sociological Interpretation* (1968) and Claude S. Fischer's "Paradoxes of American Individualism". In fact, the latter regards the findings of psychological / social researches, which show a tendency to group loyalty (familistic and moralistic) in American culture, as contradictory with the American construction of the autonomous self and the ideology of social

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<sup>105</sup> Steven Lukes, *Individualism* (1973) (Colchester: ECPR Press, 2006), p. 57-58.

<sup>106</sup> Eric Mount, "American Individualism Reconsidered," *Review of Religious Research*, Vol. 22, N° 4 (1981), p. 370. See also, Corey McWilliams' *The Idea of Fraternity in America* (1973) which traces the communitarian thought and social democratic tradition in America.

withdrawal. Yet he clarifies the contradiction by explaining American individualism in terms of voluntarism:

The nature of American distinctiveness [...] is not the principle of individualism but of voluntarism [...] Americans *freely choose* to associate with one another to attain their ends; doing so voluntarily, they commit themselves to adhere to the association and its collective rules and needs [...] Unlike individualism, voluntarism incorporated, even celebrates group affiliation. Indeed, in this worldview, individuals pursue their *personal* goals through the voluntary association.<sup>107</sup> (emphasis added)

Fischer here shows that Americans, though highly individualistic, are capable of displaying voluntarily a commitment to social affiliations. Nevertheless, Fischer's conception does not actually draw a separating line between the two concepts but rather contributes to expand the concept of individualism. In other words, rather than detaching the individualism from its purely individualistic value, Fischer's concept of voluntarism enhances it because the essence remains the same. In other words, Voluntarism is, primarily and above all, a personal choice that culminates in achieving personal needs.

As for deviance, it can be described as the subsequent behavior of individualistic people against all possible attempts to set group considerations above personal inclinations. However, reference to some definitions suggested by Bernard Bass and Michael Haralambos can be useful to explain the concept. In opposing deviation with conforming behavior, Bernard Bass explains: "Just as conforming behavior is behavior reflecting the successful influence of other persons, *deviating* behavior can be defined as behavior reflecting the *rejected* influence of other persons."<sup>108</sup> Bass associates deviation with a rejection that is pointed from the deviant toward his social group. Haralambos's definition, nevertheless, directs the rejecting effect from the society to the individual by defining deviance as activities which bring general disapproval of his social group.<sup>109</sup> Thus, rejection becomes a reciprocal effect, that is, the feeling of hostility between the society and the deviant member is equal because each views the

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<sup>107</sup> Claude S. Fischer, "Paradoxes of American Individualism", *Sociological Forum*, Vol. 23, N°. 2, (2008), p. 368.

<sup>108</sup> Bernard M. Bass, "Conformity, Deviation, and A General Theory of Interpersonal Behavior" In Irwin August Berg & Bernard M. Bass, ed. *Conformity and Deviation* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961), p. 40.

<sup>109</sup> Michael Haralambos & Martin Holborn, *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives* (1980) (London: Collins Educational, 1991), p. 581.

other as a threat. Considering the notes stated above of this short discussion of the two concepts, we can ascertain that deviance and individualism, though different concepts, remain in essence a refusal to accept social / group authority and a behavior which counters the social expectations and norms of the group.

### **1. Hester Prynne's and John Proctor's Individualism**

Identical social circumstances, such as the imposition of a dominant ideology and conformity to a sum of beliefs, are likely to create throughout history and continuously rebellious and non-conformist individuals. Consequently, similar fictional characters that incarnate these individualistic tendencies are to be found recurrently throughout literary works. Although created in distinct historical backgrounds, present in two different genres of literature, and different in gender, Hester Prynne and John Proctor echo each other and share elements that establish them equally as social deviants who crave for personal authenticity and self-realization. The strong bonds that link them together -- and the reasons for which they are identified as deviants and individualists -- consist in their intellectual reclusiveness, their different vision of the world, and more importantly their absolute commitment to that 'deviant' vision.

#### **1.1. Hester Prynne: "the world's law was no law for her mind"**

Hester defies the moral norms of her society by her adulterous affair and penetrates the patriarchal foundations through imposing a new identity as a moralizer which is a role strictly allowed to men. Hester's individualism and deviant vision cannot be well treated without examining her reaction to the act of adultery. Hester's deviant behavior starts with her surrender to passion and throughout the way with which she perceives what the others consider a 'sin'. While the act of concealment is associated with shame, revealing on the other hand is related to pride and self-glorification. In "The Prison Door," instead of hiding her badge of shame, Hester 'fully reveals' it and shows pride in wearing the scarlet letter in the artistic embroidery that opposes the plain fashion of the time. Indeed, the laws of seventeenth-century New England were very vigorous regarding outward attire. The law, for instance, forbade all embroidered or

needlework bands, caps, rayles, etc to be made or worn.<sup>110</sup> Besides, concerning social behavior, the law put death penalty on sinners in case the sin was proudly committed.<sup>111</sup> Therefore, knowing that she is already under punishment as she stands on the scaffold, Hester makes use of the fact and seizes the opportunity to show further disobedience both through the lavish embroidery of the badge of sin and through her displayed pride. Indeed, it is the scarlet letter and not Hester which is at the center of public attention and at the center of the narration. Only the Puritan women can understand Hester's behavior:

But did ever a woman, before this brazen hussy contrive such a way of showing it! why, gossips, what is it but to laugh in the faces of our godly magistrates, and make a pride out of what they, worthy gentlemen, meant for a punishment? (*The Scarlet Letter*, p.46.)

Hester's refusal to view the badge as expressing shame is a consequence of her 'deviant' way with which she considers the sinful act she had committed. In other words, viewing sacredness in the affair suggests that Hester is at odds with the Puritan rigidity with regard to passion and emotions. Nevertheless, to avoid any unpleasant view of the protagonist, the narrator provides immediately after Hester's humiliation in the scaffold scene a meeting between Hester and her husband Chillingworth. The conversation reveals some information about and the background of Hester's sin. Indeed, it is the only honest moment in the novel in which both Hester and Chillingworth blame each other. Chillingworth confesses that he wronged her first when he betrayed her 'budding youth into a false and unnatural relation with his decay.' Therefore, the inclusion of this confession right at the beginning of the story may have a double purpose. It serves to clarify and provide information about the conditions that surround Hester's fall into sin and perhaps ultimately to prevent any disagreeable feelings that readers may develop towards the protagonist.

Besides, Hester's deviance is manifested in her physical and mental alienation from her society. In fact, Hester lives on the outskirts of the town; rejected by her community she is snuggled by nature. She lives in the forest which becomes a refuge

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<sup>110</sup> Alden Vaughan, *The Puritan Tradition in America, 1620-1730* (Hanover NH: University Press of New England, 1997), p.181.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid*, p. 184.

for her as it is the only place where she is neither looked at scornfully nor reminded of her sin. However, instead of disciplining and bringing Hester within the laws of the community as the act is meant to, her reclusiveness allows her to develop a “freedom of speculation” by which she uncovers and rejects the realities of her community, notably about the condition of women and the whole social system. On alienation, the critic Nina Baym argues that because it is Hester who chooses to stay in Boston, this makes her submission to the Puritan power “provisional” hence it establishes her as “representative of the individual and personal, rather than social, power.”<sup>112</sup> Indeed, Hester knows well that if she chooses to stay, she will live as an outcast and that was the choice she had made. Even after gaining her people’s approval, Hester remains faithful to her inner principles as she refuses her society and quests for a new life outside her society. She holds plans to escape with her beloved, or in Huck Finn’s words ‘to light out for the territory ahead of the rest.’ In this respect, the character Hester evokes other familiar ‘outcast’ heroes in American literature and their aloofness from their social environment seeking their individual selves outside their societies. Indeed, in his study of the American ideology of individualism, the American philosopher Michael Novak sets the element of ‘isolation’ as a dividing line between the Puritan concept of individualism and the American one. For Novak, the Puritan model concerned not the isolated individual but the individual in the community. Therefore, social estrangement becomes an expression of the American individualist myth, “the myth of the individual moving away from family and social roots to mature by standing alone as he makes a series of individual choices.”<sup>113</sup> Thus, because Hester chooses isolation, she is estranged from the Puritan model of individualism and associated with the American one. It is this reclusiveness that, in fact, leads to her maturation as it enables her to perceive and develop a far-sighted vision of her society.

Hester’s aloofness and position as an outcast alienate her even further and pave the way for her divergent forward-looking and avant-garde stand. The stigma of shame together with her physical aloofness allow her to move from passion to thought as her

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<sup>112</sup> Nina Baym, “Who, Characters?” In Harold Bloom, ed. *Hester Prynne: Bloom’s Major Literary Characters* (Broomall: Chelsea House Publishers, 2004), p. 140.

<sup>113</sup> Michael Novak (1974), cited in Eric Mount, op. cit., p. 364.

thinking trespasses to areas where other women of her time ‘dared not tread’. Were she not alienated, Hester would not have been able to attain the position she attained. In fact, it explains why Hester’s speculation and intellectual discoveries go through steps, that is, a gradual diagnosis of her society. Isolation allows her first to uncover the hypocrisy underlying the outward purity of her townspeople as she develops “a sympathetic knowledge of the hidden sin in other hearts [...] and that if truth were everywhere to be shown, a scarlet letter would blaze forth on many a bosom besides [hers]” (*The Scarlet Letter*, p.73). Then, Hester challenges the social meaning attributed to her emblem of sin and forces her community, through her charitable deeds, to change its view of Hester the adulteress, hence of the emblem itself. Since Hester does not see her act of adultery as sinful and *immoral*, Hawthorne’s novel becomes a typical example of what Ben Robertson calls the Romantic moral romance which:

[...] challenges, on multiple levels, the very definition of ‘moral order’ as a construct for ‘correct’ conduct, suggesting that the parameters established by a government, by a particular religion or by a social group for correct behaviour may be inadequate for the individual, for whom an individual moral code may be more appropriate. Hence the hero of the romantic moral romance, written by Inchbald or Hawthorne, unlike the hero of a mediaeval chivalric romance, may exhibit ‘correct’ conduct that directly subverts traditional religious or social moral codes.<sup>114</sup>

Indeed, what the Puritan magistrates see as incorrect and sinful, Hester sees as ‘consecrated’. Thus, she challenges the moral order of her community because she does not see herself as a sinner. The reason behind Hawthorne’s position and enigmatic sympathies with Hester despite her ‘immoral’ conduct and freedom are treated in the third section when discussing the destination of her immorality. The point that is of interest here in relation to Robertson is that Hester’s ‘incorrect’ behavior is not related solely to her sin. The latter is only an outward manifestation of another socially unaccepted or a ‘Puritanically incorrect’ conduct. In fact, Hester’s unconventional position and libertarian behavior are maintained not just in acting immorally but in challenging the Puritan established norms through her perverse view of the situation of women. More clearly, the Puritans believe that women are

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<sup>114</sup> Ben P. Robertson, Inchbald, *Hawthorne and The Romantic Moral Romance: Little Histories and Neutral Territories* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2010), pp.10-11.

dependent and should remain under ‘the cover’ of the husband, yet Hester proves and establishes economic and financial independence through her needle work. Additionally, while considered a position solely and totally monopolized by male priests, counseling and moralizing becomes Hester’s new office in her patriarchal community. In this respect, the ‘A’ which stands as a symbol of Hester’s adultery at the beginning and which changes to stand for ‘Angel’ at the end may bear other symbolic meanings. In other words, the letter may also stand as a reference to the steps that Hester goes through in the novel: *Adulterous*, *Alienated*, and finally *Avant-garde*.

In relation to Hawthorne’s artistic embroidery of the character Hester, the color imagery and symbols associated with Hester seem to place her in an ambiguous position as far as her deviance is concerned. In fact, in studying the color images employed in the work, Hyatt Waggoner maintains that Hester stands between three colors: red, black, and white:

Hester’s emblem, then, points to a love both good and bad. The ambiguity of her grey robe and dark glistening hair, her black eyes and bright complexion, is thus emphasized by the flower and weed imagery [...] so Hester walks her ambiguous way between burdock and rose, neither of which is alone sufficient to define her nature and her position.<sup>115</sup>

What Waggoner describes as an ‘ambiguous’ position is related to Hester’s situation between sin / redemption, right / wrong, and good / bad, yet this vagueness seems to apply also to Hester’s stand in relation to authority and all the representations of law in her society. In other words, because Hester is a non-conformist, we expect her deviant position to be reflected in the color imagery, that is, the colors associated with the character Hester to differ from or oppose those connected to the social authorities. However, enigmatically the same colors that identify Hester apply also to the ‘authorities’ and indirectly to other aspects of law and punishment. In the first chapter, the prison, which is the emblem of authoritarian law, is described as black. Besides, red and brightness connect Hester not only with her child, Pearl, who is a punishing agent, but also with Roger Chillingworth who craves to establish justice and law. The latter’s eyes are filled with hellish red as a reference to his mean revengeful intentions.

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<sup>115</sup> Hyatt H. Waggoner, “*The Scarlet Letter*,” In Charles Feidelson & Paul Brodtkorb, ed. *Interpretations of American Literature* (1959) (New York : Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 16.

In addition, the brightness that shows in Hester's white complexion is also present in Mr. Wilson's 'extremely bright white beard'. Thus, the color imagery employed in the novel seems to estrange the deviant protagonist while at instances it brings her back to social law and authority.

### **1.2. John Proctor: "likes not the smell of authority"**

Similarly to the central character of the romance, *The Crucible's* protagonist defies his society's laws not merely by his surrender to passion outside marital bonds, but also in his ideological deviance and perverse vision and interpretation of the world.

As far as adultery is concerned, although John Proctor committed the same sin as Hester, he never shows the pride that Hester displays. This is due partly to the fact that -- unlike Hester -- John Proctor loves his wife Elizabeth and also because his sin is hidden from the public unlike Hester's. Therefore, Proctor suffers the guilt of his sin as well as hypocrisy; he is rather tortured and guilt-stricken. The act of adultery is justified as it is the case with Hester and the confession meeting between John Proctor and Elizabeth by the end of the play evokes to a far extent that which happens between Hester and Chillingworth. Elizabeth, 'the cold sniveling woman,' as she is described by Abby, admits that "it needs a cold wife to prompt lechery" and that "it was a cold house [she] kept" (*The Crucible*, Act Four, p.119.) Yet, while both are victims of marital disloyalty and deception, Elizabeth 'learns charity' by the end and helps Proctor to confront his guilt whereas Chillingworth fails, he fails to forget and forgive the "falsity" of others, hence his reduction to a Satan-like figure.

John Proctor's alienation appears in his placement outside the village as well as his intellectual reclusiveness. He is a farmer who likes nature and feels at ease while in his fields. In fact, the exclusive moments when readers see his sensitive nature are when Proctor is in his house gazing through the open doorway at the beauty of nature. In addition to his passionate nature which estranges him from the Puritan moral excessiveness, Proctor possesses an intellectual reclusiveness that sets him away and places him as a non-conformist. However, it remains doubtful to claim that it is his sin and the internal torture which allow for his diagnosis of his society and the uncovering

of its hypocrisy. In Act One, Abigail informs us that he “put knowledge in [her] heart”, thus this demonstrates that the protagonist from the beginning had a clear-cut knowledge of the realities of his social group. In fact, right from the beginning, a separating line between Proctor and his community is drawn. His libertarianism and deviance appear, both in thought and action, throughout the scenes that show his reclusive stand not only towards his people and the representations of the authorities, but also towards its practices and perceptions. In Act One, he strikes his people when he declares his readiness to join a faction against “authority” because he likes not the smell of this “authority”. Additionally, he adheres to his own laws rather than the social ones. More explicitly, because he disbelieves the purity of the minister, Proctor ‘boycotts’ and eliminates all that is related to church. In Act Two, we learn that he has not visited the church for a considerable time, has not baptized his last child, and works on Sundays (though this does not exclude the supposition that his ‘rejection’ of the church stems from the fact that he is a sinner since Parris keeps preaching about Hell).

Like Hester, Miller’s protagonist is torn between his identity and the one dictated by his society. From the very beginning, Proctor does not allow his society to dictate on him what he should believe in and how he should behave and be. He refuses to accept and to submit to the authorities as he tries hard to show the truth. In fact, this is apparent in his constant search for ‘the proof’ in order to show that the beliefs that the others in his society seem to stick to so strongly are not right. He tries first to prove the inexistence of witchcraft without casting away his good reputation. When his wife is arrested after being accused by Abby, he protests:

I’ll tell you what’s walking Salem -- vengeance is walking Salem. We are what we always were in Salem, but now the little crazy children are jangling the keys of the kingdom, and common vengeance writes the law [...] We are only what we always were but naked now. (*The Crucible*, Act Two, p.72-75.)

This highly symbolic philosophical language that Proctor uses to describe the condition of the village is inconsistent with his status as a farmer. Indeed, in this particular scene, he appears as an educated man who diagnoses his society and reveals a hidden conspiracy. Thus, Proctor’s aloofness trespasses his actual status as a farmer

and explains why he is both respected and feared by his people. Like Hester Prynne, John Proctor rejects the interpretation, norms, and beliefs of his community and maintains his own instead. His reaction while interrogated by Hale shows his true commitment to his personal beliefs. Both the protagonist and his wife admit that witchcraft is mentioned in the Bible, but they both opt to deny the things they have ‘no knowledge of.’ However, differently from the novel’s protagonist, we have no indication that John Proctor’s *maturation* and forward-looking perception are an outcome of his social isolation. In other words, John Proctor, as indicated earlier, opposes the authorities and stands aside from his society right from the beginning of the play. Consequently, it will be inadequate to assume that it is his isolation that enables him, as is the case with Hawthorne’s protagonist, to mature and develop his pioneering and radical vision.

Studying the imagery employed in the play serves to show the protagonist’s reclusiveness, deviance, and oddness with whatever is related to authority. Moreover, whatever Proctor stands for is suggested by images of coldness while images indicating fire are associated with the authorities. A series of binary oppositions of Evil / Good, Fire / Water, Hotness / Coldness, Pretence / Truth, Authority / Resistance, Hell / Heaven, Lucifer / God, Sin / Morality are present and maintained throughout the play to intensify both the non-conformist position of the protagonist as well as the paradoxes in the village. Evil and fire symbolism is established already in the opening scene as we learn that the girls were dancing and making charms in the forest. Additionally, the church is paradoxically a place where only “hellfire and damnation” are preached. Not only the church relates to hell, but also the court. When his wife is arrested, Proctor assures her that he “will fall like an *ocean* on that court!” and that “God’s icy wind will blow!” while in Act two, Danforth compares the court to a crucible: “we burn a hot fire here; it melts down all concealment.”(*The Crucible*, Act Three, p.81). When he fails to uncover the truths, Proctor comments insanely that “God is dead!”, “a fire is burning” and tells Danforth “You are pulling down Heaven and raising up a whore” (*The Crucible*, Act Three, p.105). The fire / ice imagery, which sets the protagonist apart from the authorities, is maintained to the end. In fact, relieved as they learn about Proctor’s decision to confess, the authorities rush, as the

narrator comments, in “*a business like, rapid entrance, as though the ice had been broken*” (*The Crucible*, Act Four, p.120). Consequently, associating the protagonist with ice imagery and social power and authority to fire and hell symbolism helps to reinforce the former’s position as an avant-garde and a non-conformist individual.

### 1.3. Inner Oriented vs. Other Oriented

In his study of the American social character,<sup>116</sup> David Riesman identifies three types that developed throughout the historical and cultural phases of the American society. He remarks a shift from the Tradition directed (seventeenth century) to the inner-directed (nineteenth century) and finally towards an other-directed social character type that characterized the twentieth century. Riesman’s work is useful to identify and further question the extent to which Hester and Proctor, who are creations of a seventeenth-century Puritan society, are avant-garde individualists and representatives of the inner- directed and other- directed types respectively.

Several elements embodied in the character Hester Prynne draw her away from the Puritan tradition-directed character type and establish her as representative of the inner-directed one of the nineteenth century. The inner-directed is “capable of maintaining a balance between the demands upon him of his goal in life and the befitting of his external environment.”<sup>117</sup> Indeed, in addition to her personal choices and highly individualized nature, Hester is injected with the Emersonian self-reliance principle, hence she evokes the mythological figure of the self-made ‘man’, a version apparent in most nineteenth-century fiction as Herman Melville’s, William D. Howell’s, and Henry James’s works. In fact, after becoming an object of shame, stripped of her social identity and place in the village, and dependent on none but her needle work, Hester works to earn a living and more significantly to *create* for herself a new position and identity. By the end of the story, the narrator comments: “The outcast of society at once found her place. She came, not as a guest, but as a rightful

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<sup>116</sup> Social character is defined by Riesman as a mode of ensuring conformity. Other factors as child rearing, population growth, economy and the way of life determine the dominant type of social character. The author maintains that Americans in earlier days were freer; the inner directed was gradually replaced by a more conformist type. Besides, it is important to mention that these character types are constructions based on a selection of certain historical problems for investigation.

<sup>117</sup> David Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd* (1950) (New York: Ballou Press, 1989), p. 16.

inmate” (*The Scarlet Letter*, p.136). Besides, Hester’s final position is that of a moralizer and Riesman attributes this feature as a typical characteristic of the inner-directed style.

Equally, John Proctor is estranged from the tradition-directed Puritan society, yet he presents a complicated case as he is very internally driven to match the other-directed character type that emerged in the time of his creation. More clearly, in his definition of the type, Riesman describes the other-directed as someone who constantly obtains from others a flow of guidance, expectation, and approbation.<sup>118</sup> John Proctor is rather internally driven as he refuses to accept the influence of others even when his own life is at stake. In fact, in addition to the instances discussed earlier of his adherence to his own laws, the most striking evidence of his self-guidance is provided at the close of the play. As Proctor inquires about the reaction of Rebecca Nurse and Giles Corey, we expect him *to imitate* his friends in their refusal to confess. However, it is clear that he refuses to die like them because he sees himself a fraud, hence undeserving. He chooses death only after a long internal conflict after which he *decides* what is *right* to do. Thus, his death is the result of his own decision and choice. Besides, another element that separates Proctor from the conformity and the other-directedness, which is attributed to the twentieth century social character, is his status as a farmer and his placement in a rural setting; a condition that Riesman associates with inner-directedness. Eventually, the playwright Miller created the character of John Proctor during a period in which the other-directed was the dominant type of social character, but injected him with inner-directed principles. This may have two explanations, either that the playwright longed for that time when demands for conformity were low and the individual spirit was higher. The other possibility is that John Proctor is created to stand as a representative of the few who could still refuse influence, stood against the dominant mode of thinking imposed in the 1950s, and fought for their right of the freedom of thought. John Proctor, therefore, fits Riesman’s inner-directed type just as Hester Prynne does.

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<sup>118</sup> *Ibid*, p.31.

However, David Riesman states that: “the inner-directed person appear[s] far more independent than he really is. He is no less a conformist to others than the other-directed person.”<sup>119</sup> Riesman’s statement seems to place resistance and self-pioneering within the scope of social conformity. Regarding this, then are Proctor’s and Hester’s resistance, individualism, and inner-directedness a mere façade that covers conformist individuals? The supposition, indeed, covers both characters, John Proctor and Hester Prynne as well, especially when considering that Riesman has not included nor referred to women in his study of social character types. The section that follows illuminates more the protagonists’ cases and position through testing the liability of the Foucauldian / Greenblattian deterministic conception of self-fashioning and resistance on both protagonists. Thus, the following section questions what can be called the protagonists’ fake deviance and whether their apparent rebellious acts hide inner-submissiveness.

## **2. Assessing Resistance from a Foucauldian / Greenblattian Angle: Hester Prynne and John Proctor: Fake deviants?**

The previous section has contributed to demonstrate that the two protagonists, in fact, possess qualities that establish them as examples of the individualist American who is internally-driven and who is capable of pioneering. However, looking at or considering the individual, social resistance and dissent from a Foucauldian and Greenblattian perspective dictates a reconsideration of their non-conformity and individuality. This section investigates the extent to which Foucault’s view that resistance is society-made and Greenblatt’s perception that individuals are fashioned by society, apply to both protagonists. After clarifying the two philosophical views, we shall investigate how the protagonists’ deviance and non-conformity can be perceived as ‘fake’.

- The Foucauldian conception

In his study of power, Michel Foucault refers to the relation between the individual and power as he claims its unlimited and ubiquitous presence and capacity to the

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid, p.31.

extent of producing and controlling even modes of opposition. He explains this capacity by the complementary relation between power and freedom. In “The Subject and Power,” he claims that power and freedom are mutually exclusive, that is, freedom is a condition for the exercise of power, and when the latter is exercised, freedom disappears.<sup>120</sup> In other words, to freely choose not to submit would mean and inevitably entail the presence of a social power to suppress this refusal. Besides, on how power *creates* and eventually represses dissent, he explains:

The multiplicity of force relations (including dissenting forces) immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization: as the process which, through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens, or reverses them.<sup>121</sup>

Foucault indicates that resistance and dissenting forces turn out to be means by which power extends and strengthens itself. More clearly, power works through creating, challenging, and reversing resistance. In this case, the heroic view of social resistance or of the individual who stands against social attempts at repressing his personal liberties ceases to exist for Foucault. Social power, eventually, aborts all sorts of struggle and leaves no space for successful resistance.

- The Greenblattian view

Drawing from and expanding on Foucault, Stephen Greenblatt places the self and society in a cause / effect relationship. More explicitly, he views the individual as an effect or as a product of forces over which he possesses no control, arguing that autonomy or ‘fashioning oneself’ is impossible:

I perceived that fashioning oneself or being fashioned by cultural institutions-- family, religion, state -- were inseparably intertwined [...] the human subject itself began to seem remarkably unfree, the ideological product of the relations of power in a particular society. Whenever I focused sharply upon a moment of apparently autonomous self-fashioning, I found not an epiphany of identity freely chosen but a cultural artifact.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Michel Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 8, N°. 4, The University of Chicago Press (1982), p. 790.

<sup>121</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, trans. Robert Hurley, Vol.1: *An Introduction* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), p. 92.

<sup>122</sup> Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p. 256.

Greenblatt clarifies that what appears to be self-fashioned is in reality and ultimately society-fashioned. Therefore, if societal forces inhibit or limit the individual from fashioning himself / herself, then it may restrain any rebellious attempts to resist this fashioning. In a similar vein, Greenblatt further argues that the old glorified rebellious hero who rebels against submission has vanished because societal power controls opposition.<sup>123</sup> He interprets dissent or opposition as a way or a process to “de-individualize” the individual, hence to make him conform. That is, resistance for Greenblatt is merely one of the facets of maintaining conformity.

### 2.1. Re-considering Hester’s ‘New Identity’

Throughout its episodes, the novel encourages readers to view Hester as an individual who has created for herself a new identity and obliged her society to review her badge of shame, hence her sinful reality. For instance, the critic Baym, as stated earlier, insists that Hester *earned* that position by helping the poor. However, the romance seems to bear contradicting statements that undermine this belief by claiming the *despotism* of the public:

The public is despotic in its temper; it is capable of denying common justice when too strenuously demanded as a right; but quite as frequently it awards more than justice when the appeal is made, as despots love to have it made, entirely to its generosity [...] society was inclined to show its former victim a more benign countenance than she cared to be favored with, or, perchance, than she deserved. (*The Scarlet Letter*, p.137.)

Hawthorne here provides an understanding of society that is very close to Foucault’s and Greenblatt’s, that is, a society which possesses unlimited power in suggesting that it is the society that *gave* Hester this new position. The cited quote comes in a chapter that is entitled: “*Another View of Hester*” (my emphasis) as if to undermine or remove any previous optimistic or heroic readings about Hester’s resistance and new position, that readers might have developed throughout the novel. Indeed, the statement comes right after informing us that the ‘A’ that appeared in the sky was interpreted as “Angel” by the people. Therefore, to investigate how society ‘fashions’ Hester, it is quite relevant to re-consider the truthfulness of her charitable deeds, her return to

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid, pp.203-208.

Boston, and more importantly her ‘deliberate’ resuming of the letter “A” on her bosom.

Hester does not believe that she sinned, but she realizes that she needs society to ‘forgive’ her and accept her in order to be able to start anew. Thus, her charitable acts can be read in the same light as her choice to stay in Boston, that is, a way to make society accept her. In fact, rather than made for Dimmesdale’s sake as both Nina Baym and Mary Wearn<sup>124</sup> explain in their readings, Hester’s choice to stay is driven by her belief and hope that the severity of the trial, and her charity will help redeem and purify her:

What she compelled herself to believe [...] was half a truth, and half a self delusion. Here, she said to herself, had been the scene of her guilt, and here should be the scene of her earthly punishment; and so, perchance, the torture of her daily shame would at length purge her soul and work out another purity than that which she had lost; more saintlike, because the result of martyrdom.  
(*The Scarlet Letter*, p.68.)

Therefore, Hester looks for redemption to be accepted in her society. Even the ways or the means with which she creates her new identity are fashioned by society’s laws rather than hers. Although her charity is a deliberate choice since she herself decides to act so, the ultimate purpose is to gain social approval. Indeed, this idea is further reinforced with Hester’s transformation. In other words, as the narrator informs us, Hester ceased to be the affectionate woman because she has to face a severe punishment in which case survival needs coldness and toughness. Thus, if Hester is no more the pillow of affection, how can she be affectionate to others, and notably to members of a community that punish her daily? Thus, Hester’s charitable acts are merely a way to force society to accept her. They are part of the process of purifying herself and of working out a new identity. Hester ‘fashions’ herself by society and for society’s sake.

For many critics, Hester’s return is given conflicting interpretations. While apparent as an act driven by her free will, critics view this behavior as an acceptance

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<sup>124</sup> Mary M. Wearn, *Negotiating Motherhood in Nineteenth Century American Literature* (New York: Routledge, 2008), p.69.

or as a recognition of society's judgment and law. The idea of Hester's recognition of her society is remarkable in Mellissa Pennell's, Nina Baym's, Sacvan Bercovitch's, and Thomas Brook's readings. Mellissa Pennell, for instance, interprets Hester's return as an acceptance of the community's influence on the individual will.<sup>125</sup> In fact, these views seem to resonate Greenblatt's view of the impossibility of fashioning oneself and of rebels who turn out to be merely conformists especially when considering the narrator's own comment that:

It is remarkable that persons who speculate the most boldly often conform with the most perfect quietude to the external regulations of society. The thought suffices them, without investing it itself in the flesh and blood of action. So it seemed to be with Hester. (*The Scarlet Letter*, p. 140.)

The narrator clearly declares the conformity of Hester. The latter is fashioned because she attempts to change her shameful identity which changes indeed, but only with her community's permission. Had society not accepted and willed 'to fashion' her, to give her a new status, Hester would not have been able to achieve what she achieved. Hester makes herself and readers believe that resuming the badge is an act of free will -- as is the case with her previous acts -- yet in reality she does so because her adulterous reality has been her identity in Boston and will remain so because it is part of her self, of *who* Hester Prynne is in Boston.

Nevertheless, the narrator's words in the last cited quote suggest that Hester conforms, but they also imply that her conformity is only public and not at all private. In fact, Hester is compliant, she displays an outward submission but holds, indeed, inward revolutionary attitudes and ideas which she cannot (or possibly chooses not to) apply. In fact, Robert Evans describes her resistance as "*passive disobedience*". Evans claims that, through her threatening words and behavior in the Governor's house upon Pearl's custody dispute, "Hester has shown herself to be a *potential* and dangerous rebel."<sup>126</sup>(my emphasis). Thus, Evans' words: 'passive' and 'potential' reinforce the idea that Hester is not submissive or at least not completely so. On the other hand,

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<sup>125</sup> Melissa M. Pennell, *Masterpieces of American Romantic Literature* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2006), p. 93.

<sup>126</sup> Robert C. Evans, "Civil Disobedience and *RealPolitik* in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*," In Harold Bloom, ed. *Bloom's Literary Themes: Civil Disobedience* (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2010), p.252.

what can be suggested or considered is also the possibility of a Hester that fancies her free will. More clearly, the protagonist believes and maintains to the end the conviction that she is the one who ‘fashions’ her own destiny in the society. The replacement of the letter on her bosom can indicate Hester’s acknowledgment of the limits of free will, but it also suggests her persistent abiding to her radical ideas and individual inclinations, though, illusory. Indeed, drawing a link between the final act of the removal and replacement of the ‘A’ of the end of the story with the one that occurs in the forest scene will be quite helpful to show that Hester lives in and believes the illusion that she is the one who controls her life and identity and not her community. In the forest scene, as she denies the past and encourages Dimmesdale to do the same, Hester removes the badge and tells him “See! With this symbol, I undo it all and make it as it had never been” (*The Scarlet Letter*, p.172.) Hester, in fact, only fantasizes that she can ‘undo it all’. She deceives herself because when she did so, her Pearl did not recognize her. When the badge goes, so do Pearl and Hester. All is interconnected. Even when she dies, we are told the letter ‘A’ is placed on her tombstone. Therefore, the act of resuming the letter can stand as an acknowledgement of the community’s power, which Hester shows in her outward conformity, as it can be seen as an illusion of independent choice that Hester seems to delude herself with and to remain true to up to the end. The supposition of Hester’s illusion of individual free will and / or a Hester who conforms only outwardly is relevant.

## **2.2. Re-interpreting John Proctor’s New ‘conception of himself’**

The playwright states a pessimistic view early in the play in which he acknowledges social repression: “It is still impossible for man to organize his social life without repressions, and the balance has yet to be struck between order and freedom” (*The Crucible*, Act One, p.16.) Miller’s early statement may, to a far extent, throw skepticism on Proctor’s resistance. However, unlike Hester’s case, John Proctor’s deviant practices and individualism cannot be double-edged. In other words, the ambivalence characterizing Hester’s position -- as she seems to fluctuate between a revolutionary and a conformist, and between Riesman’s inner-oriented and other-oriented types, which are altogether expressed in the multiplicity of images associated

with her -- does not apply to Miller's protagonist. In fact, the narrator from the beginning of the play provides information about the protagonist Proctor that establishes him as a 'true' internally-driven individual: "He is a sinner, a sinner not only against the moral fashion of the time, but against his own vision of decent conduct" (*The Crucible*, Act One, p.27). In other words, these words emphasize the individuality of John Proctor and his commitment to his own vision rather than the society's because they clarify that his guilt for being fake stems from his betrayal of his own values of decency. John Proctor's acts as previously treated and throughout the four acts, indicate both a private and a public disobedience. Unlike Hester, he thinks and acts alike and shows no sign of outward conformity.

Nevertheless, although we can dismiss the possibility of a double-faceted Proctor, one that conforms and another that is revolutionary, the supposition of a Proctor who fantasizes "saintliness" and a new identity different from the impure one that he revealed at the end is quite palpable. John Proctor, equally to Hester, deludes himself about keeping an identity or a name that is pure for his children apart from 'the social one' he had had as a result of his adulterous affair. In the final Act, he goes through an internal conflict after which he decides to die saintlike. He believes that his death and his refusal to collaborate gave him a new identity, or rather enabled him to restore his pure name which he had lost by committing adultery. In a similar reaction to Willy Loman in Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, Proctor cries, "I am John Proctor" and in refusing to sign, repeats: "because it is my name! Because I cannot have another in my life." Ironically, although he refuses to confess to a lie and to name names, he dies for witchcraft. That is, his name which he left behind is already tainted not solely by witchcraft but by adultery as well. Therefore, Miller seems to admit some power of society, but at the same time celebrates individualism and resistance, even if they are only an illusion.

Consequently, the Foucauldian and Greenblattian causality / deterministic view of the individual as a product fashioned by society falls short when it comes to Miller's John Proctor. Although fantasizing a pure reputation and name, Proctor maintains a rebellious individualistic spirit and abides by his own vision to the end.

Christopher Bigsby, who links post-war theater with the depression rather than the war, claims the presence of the principle of social causation in Miller's play, yet he ultimately acknowledges the existence of the resistance spirit in Miller's plays: "The essence of his [Miller's] concern seems clear enough and it lies in the necessity to resist such determinism in the conviction that the self is not a product alone of the forces that bear it upon."<sup>127</sup> Indeed, Proctor's resistance and revolutionary spirit set him apart from Hawthorne's Hester and eventually from conforming neither publicly nor privately. It explains why no double-edged meanings can be detected in the portrayal of the character. It explains, as well, why the character's construction does not match Riesman's other-directed social character i.e. he does not apply to the character type supposed to dominate in the time of his creation. Besides, the imagery associated with John Proctor is static from the beginning to the end unlike the one attributed to Hester which reflects her ambiguous position between conformity and disobedience.

### **3. The Scope of Attaining Individual Freedom and Authenticity:**

#### **Natural Freedom and Civil Liberty**

So far, we have attempted to clarify and formulate the position of the two protagonists as far as their resistance to society is concerned. Although in some areas they seem to acknowledge social forces, still both Hester Prynne and John Proctor cannot be, as demonstrated earlier, labeled as conformists but they maintain a resistant spirit that puts them at odds with their societies respectively. Nevertheless, we may question how far and how much Hester's return and Proctor's death say about *the limits* of individual free choice and fulfillment. Therefore, this final section is devoted to investigate the extent to which Hawthorne and Miller allow their protagonists to practice their individual aspirations and achieve their self-authenticity. The novelist's and the playwright's support of Hester and Proctor respectively seems to be strong when it concerns their ideological deviance and achievement, yet their approval decreases when it comes to offering the protagonists a new private beginning.

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<sup>127</sup> C.W.E. Bigsby, "Arthur Miller: The Moral Imperative" In C.W.E. Bigsby, ed. *Modern American Drama: 1945-2000* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p.72.

### 3.1. Natural Freedom

Both Hester and Proctor break the law to exercise and enjoy a personal freedom that negates all social obligations and considerations. Because both surrender to their passion, they practice what John Winthrop, the founding father and governor of the Massachusetts Bay colony, calls a 'natural liberty'. The latter is "common to men with the beasts and other creatures. By this, man, as he stands in relation to man simply hath liberty to do what he lists, it is a liberty to evil as well as to good."<sup>128</sup> The same concept is used by the philosophers Thomas Hobbes and Jeann-Jack Rousseau to describe the kind of freedom that people have in the 'state of nature'.<sup>129</sup> For instance, the philosopher J. J. Rousseau defines this freedom as an unlimited right to everything emphasizing the absence of duties and obligations.<sup>130</sup> Both the protagonist of *The Scarlet Letter* and of *The Crucible* negate all kinds of obligations, moral and social, by committing adultery. Furthermore, because they are both married, Hester and Proctor violate the marital bond setting aside their marital duties towards their partners; Hester towards her 'dead' husband Chillingworth and Proctor towards his wife Elizabeth. Observing how 'Nature' is presented in the works in question, particularly in relation to the protagonists, helps to further associate Hester's and Proctor's sin with natural freedom and more significantly reveals the authors' position towards this kind of freedom. Because 'nature' in both works bears a double meaning, it stands for the protagonists' sin of passion.

Indeed, nature in both the romance and the play bears an equal meaning and function. In other words, it is the place where the protagonists of the works under study Hester and Proctor live and find rest, yet at the same time it is associated with evil. This dual symbolic meaning suggests that nature refers to the protagonists' passion, but because the adulterous act that they committed is against morality, nature

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<sup>128</sup> John Winthrop, cited in Robert C. Winthrop, *Life and Letters of John Winthrop, from 1630 to 1649* (1867) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), p.341.

<sup>129</sup> The state of nature as used by both philosophers refers to the hypothetical phase or the condition existing before the social contract was made.

<sup>130</sup> Mathew Simpson, *Rousseau's Theory of Freedom* (London: The Tower Building, 2006), pp.8-9.

conveys corrupt implications. Hester and Proctor live away from their societies. Since living in a Puritan milieu leaves no space for emotional expression, nature becomes the only refuge where each of the protagonists can open up and be himself / herself. In the *Scarlet Letter*, when Hester meets Dimmesdale, nature seems to *protect* them:

The boughs were tossing heavily above their heads; while one solemn old tree groaned dolefully to another, as if telling the sad story of the pair that sat beneath, or constrained to forbid evil to come. (*The Scarlet Letter*, p.166.)

In this forest scene, Hester Prynne leads a conversation with her lover about a subject which could not have been mentioned elsewhere. It is at this moment that readers meet again the beautiful Hester of the first chapter. In Arthur Miller's play, as noted earlier, John Proctor's sensitiveness and his love for beauty appears only when he is in his farmhouse. While praising 'the beauty' of Massachusetts, he is moved by the smell of purple lilacs, the flowers which symbolize the first emotions of love. (*The Crucible*, Act Two, p.52). Besides, nature is the only place where he cannot pretend and stands as he is, a sinner. His wife Elizabeth knows about his adulterous act and keeps reminding him of his sin.

Nevertheless, nature's beauty that both protagonists admire and cling to turns out to have a wild facet. In both works in question, it stands for Evil. In fact, in Hawthorne's novel, Pearl tells her mother that the forest is haunted by the Black Man; it is also the place that the witch Mistress Hibbins frequents and from where Roger Chillingworth, who has developed satanic qualities, collects his herbs. Besides, in Greek mythology, female sexuality is associated with the earth / land whereas the cultivation of the land is associated with men. Shari Benstock claims that in *The Scarlet Letter*, particularly the part which describes the Governor's garden, there is a failure to grow vegetation. In other words, vegetation grows beyond the boundaries and provides gigantic fruits. This image of excessiveness suggests, as Benstock states, the failure of civilization to bring nature / female sexuality under control.<sup>131</sup> Therefore, this excessiveness that is connected to nature stands for Hester's immorality. Equally to *The Scarlet Letter*, Miller warns us, as the play begins, that "the virgin forest was the Devil's last

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<sup>131</sup> Shari Benstock, "The Scarlet Letter (a)dorée, or the Female Body Embroidered," In Ross C. Murfin, ed. *Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism: Nathaniel Hawthorne The Scarlet Letter* (New York: Bedford / St. Martin's, 2006), pp. 400-401.

preserve, his home base and the citadel of his final stand” (*The Crucible*, Act One, p.15). Therefore, nature refers to passion, yet because it is associated with evil, it stands for seeking a natural selfish liberty outside the bonds of society and morality. The duality in the meaning of nature is an indication of the authors’ sympathy with their protagonists and at the same time of their condemnation of their sin. In fact, Hawthorne and Miller refuse to allow them a new beginning. Hester plans to escape with Dimmesdale and to start anew and Proctor leads a highly emotional and tear-jerking discussion with his wife Elizabeth in which each asks for forgiveness and expresses love for one another. These are moments in which readers most desire, expect, and feel eager for a final happy reunion between the protagonist -- of each work -- with his / her beloved. However, the reunion never comes and these rosy aspirations are undermined and never allowed -- in *The Scarlet Letter* by Dimmesdale’s death and in *The Crucible* by Proctor’s execution. The explanation behind the authors’ sympathy towards their protagonists and their subsequent ‘punishment’ of them seems to be provided by Thomas Brook in “Love and Politics, Sympathy and Justice in *The Scarlet Letter*”:

On the one hand, Hawthorne appeals to sympathy to temper the rigid and authoritarian rule of a system in which ‘religion and law were almost identical’, on the other, he warns of the dangers of having that sympathy embrace natural liberty with all of its potential dangers.<sup>132</sup>

Thus, nature symbolism that is employed in both works helps to indicate and reinforce the authors’ stand towards their protagonists’ moral transgression. By sympathizing, they denounce the rigidity or the emotional ‘poverty’ that is fed by the Puritan authoritarian rule whereas aborting the protagonists’ hope to start anew reflects their condemnation of the dangers of seeking natural freedom. Both the novelist and the playwright, thus, maintain the undeniable importance of particular forms of social repression and conformity.

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<sup>132</sup> Thomas Brook, “Love and Politics, Sympathy and Justice in *The Scarlet Letter*,” In Richard H. Millington, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Nathaniel Hawthorne* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 165. The author attributes Hawthorne’s sympathy also to the latter’s desire for the reform of the institution of marriage in his time which needed to be more responsive to the powerful force of erotic love and the sympathies that it awakens.

### 3.2. Civil Liberty

Hawthorne's and Miller's inability to offer their protagonists a new chance shifts to a great support when the concern is with the protagonist's civil liberty or the freedom of belief, thought, and the right to be intellectually different. Juxtaposing Hester's and Proctor's cases with Winthrop's and Rousseau's definition of civil liberty reveals that Hawthorne and Miller present another variation of what 'civil' liberty is and how it can be achieved. John Winthrop defines civil liberty "in reference to the covenant between God and man, in the moral law, and the politic covenants and constitutions amongst men themselves [...] this liberty is maintained and exercised in a way of subjection to authority."<sup>133</sup> Winthrop believes that civil liberty is bound by two contracts; one is moral and another is social which concerns the relation between the subject, his community members, and the authorities. Thus, civil liberty in the Puritanical sense can be achieved through submission to authority. Rousseau's conceptualization of the term and the conditions he sets for the creation of a social contract are based on similar principle:

When the common good requires something of a citizen, that person cannot appeal to independent rights against the community as a whole in order to preserve his or her freedom [...] a political society can limit the rights of its members only when the good of the whole makes it necessary.<sup>134</sup>

Indeed, in Winthrop's and Rousseau's definition of civil liberty, there is an emphasis on the necessity to *surrender* personal rights to the common good for the creation of a political society, especially when these personal rights oppose the authority. In other words, people achieve a civil liberty when they abandon an individual right for the common benefit of the community. In each of the novel and the play, the protagonist holds an ideological vision and acts in a way that counters the norms of the society, however, they both achieve a 'civil liberty' without having to abandon or surrender that individual right which is to think differently. Indeed, although Hester and Proctor seem to admit the bond that links them to their community yet without giving-up that

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<sup>133</sup> John Winthrop, op. cit., p. 341.

<sup>134</sup> J.J. Rousseau in Mathew Simpson, op. cit., p. 54.

right. More clearly, neither Hester nor Proctor relinquishes his / her own principles, but rather they both continue to think and act in a way that not only opposes the Puritan authority, but constitutes a threat to it. In “Citizen Hester: *The Scarlet Letter* as Civic Myth,” Thomas Brook believes that Hester in her return devotes herself to her society and achieves by so doing good citizenship: “she returns as a woman devoted [...] not to individual fulfillment but to the interpersonal relations of civil society.”<sup>135</sup> Although Brook describes Hester as a good citizen because of her *social* office, that social practice is still revolutionary; it is a practice foreign to women in the Puritan patriarchal society. Hester disobeys and counters the social code and authority by this taboo practice, still Hawthorne allows her to preserve that right because it is also devoted to the common good. In fact, Hester puts her theorizing and thoughts into practice by working as a counselor and a moralizer though this practice is not allowed in her community. In this case, what Hester practices is a ‘civil’ liberty that opposes the state but at the same time is directed to the community’s good. Hester triumphs at the end to preserve and carry on her vision, though, revolutionary. This civil liberty sets her apart from the adulterous ‘selfish’ Hester and from Winthrop’s and Rousseau’s conceptualization of civil liberty.

The civility that Hester displays in her ideological deviance and its fate is very similar to the play’s protagonist John Proctor. The latter opts for society as well and sacrifices his life to rescue his village. He refuses to name names (similarly to Hester in the opening scene) because naming goes against or violates his (and her) personal conscience. This non-conformity is not an act of individual selfishness or egotism because they refuse to act so not to protect themselves, but in order to protect others. Joshua E. Polster refers to John Proctor’s final act as an act of *civil* disobedience:

Proctor was given the chance to save his life by confessing to witchery and naming names, but, in an act of civil disobedience, he chose death over betraying his integrity and the townspeople.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Thomas Brook, “Citizen Hester: *The Scarlet Letter* as Civic Myth” In Ross C. Murfin, ed. *Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism: Nathaniel Hawthorne’s The Scarlet Letter*, 2nd edition (Boston: Bedford/st. Martns, 2006), p. 449.

<sup>136</sup> Joshua E. Polster, “Civil Disobedience in *The Crucible*” In Harold Bloom, ed. *Bloom’s Literary Themes: Civil Disobedience* (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2010), p.133.

Polster's description of Proctor's act as 'civil disobedience' sets him apart from the adulterous one and places him and Hester on one scale. Indeed, if Proctor had chosen to save his life, he would have ended an individualist who puts self-interest above all. His adulterous sin and the act of hiding the sin from the public in order to protect his reputation indicate that John Proctor has been acting for self-concern and interest. Yet this egotism changes by the end into a care for the social concern and a sacrifice as he finally refuses to lie and sell his friends: "I have three children—how may I teach them to walk like men in the world, and I sold my friends?" (*The Crucible*, Act Four, p.124). However, in remaining faithful to his vision, Proctor opposes the authority and serves the public interest at the same time. In other words, in the authorities' eyes he is a social dissent because he refuses to admit witchcraft while at the same time if he admitted, the court would gain a strong proof of the validity of its practices which were in reality wrong. Therefore, his final act marks an end to his utter selfishness and egotism. Although Hester and Proctor act in opposition to the authorities, this opposition is ultimately devoted to the community's good. By acting as such, they attain a civil liberty not through submission to the state but rather through resistance. It is because that resistance is socially beneficial that they are, eventually, allowed to preserve their ideological deviance. Thus, the playwright and the novelist lay the door open for their protagonists to achieve and maintain a civil liberty by which they preserve both their right to think differently and the public good.

The protagonists of the works in question challenge and oppose the social code of their societies by two acts of disobedience: one that is natural which is the act of adultery, and another that is ideological and civil which marks their perverse or taboo vision and understanding of the world. The fate of their search for natural and immoral liberty is a severe denial of an earthly new beginning that both protagonists aspire for while their ideological deviance is approved. Both Hester and Proctor are *allowed* to carry on and preserve their avant-garde vision though revolutionary and socially daring. They are allowed not merely because they seek to attain a liberty of thought, but because their disobedience is not selfish but civil, it is a pursuit of liberty that transcends the quest for mere individual interest and egotism. Considering some American theories on individualism like Henry Murray's, the works in question

(through their ends) seem to foster a new kind of individualism, one which Murray refers to as “adulthood individualism”<sup>137</sup> in which case there is a blending of self liberty with social concerns or relations. Indeed, Hester’s and Proctor’s individualism goes through a process of maturation as they move from and abandon selfish, adolescent, or ‘rugged’ individualism -- in which they had placed their self-interest above all communal obligations and considerations — to finally achieve an individualism that bonds rather than estranges them from their social environment. Therefore, the works in question present a warning to excessive individualism and egotism, thus carrying avant-garde perceptions as far as American individualism and personal liberty are concerned.

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<sup>137</sup> Henry Murray, cited in Eric Mount, *op. cit.*, p. 374.

# Conclusion

## Conclusion

This research work is a contribution towards investigating the theme of authoritarianism, conformity, and the quest for individual authentic selfhood in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) and Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* (1953). The research is based on Ihab Hassan's theory of comparative literature, parallelism, in which harmony in different literatures is explained in terms of historical similarity. In addition to examining the themes of authoritarianism and conformity in the works in question, the study demonstrates the scope of the individual's resistance as well as the possibility of achieving an authentic sense of self.

In examining the historical periods in which each of the works in question was produced, the research has found aspects of authoritarianism which explain the Puritan background injected in both works. However, while the anti-democratic adherence, coercive conformity, and the fear of the new and the intellectually different are explicitly perceived in the playwright's time during the McCarthyist era, they were rather implicit in the novelist's time. More clearly, the American Republic during the 1840s saw the rise of ideological movements such as Transcendentalism, Abolitionism, and more importantly, Feminism. The latter aimed at gaining the political, economic, social, and intellectual rights of women in the American society. Therefore, the period knew an advent of women intellectuals and writers who were embraced by the nation's slogans of gender equality. However, the ideology of gender equality proved to be a surface support and an empty slogan regarding the practices of the American institutions and the contemporary discourses that promoted patriarchy. Therefore, both protagonists Hester Prynne and John Proctor, with their resistance to the political, moral, and social code of the Puritan society, are deeply immersed in the time of their construction. John Proctor breaks the moral law by surrendering to passion outside marital bonds and defies the social mode by standing against the paranoiac witch-hunt ideology. Yet the character displays, despite his sin, moral and intellectual maturity. Hester Prynne, as well, defies the social order by committing adultery, but develops an ideologically farsighted vision which counters the prevailing patriarchal ideologies in her society. As for the works' participation in history, *The*

*Crucible* stands as a resisting act to the anti-communist discourse in which the American culture of the time was enveloped. *The Scarlet Letter*, however, seems to fluctuate between promoting the patriarchy -- which reflects the author's notorious expression; 'a mob of scribblers,' with which he described contemporary women intellectuals and writers -- and supporting the feminist movement which seems to appear in his 'glorification' of the female revolutionist heroine of the novel.

Upon disclosing features of authoritarianism, notably the presence of anti-democratic assumptions (though with varying degrees) in the 1840s and the 1950s, the study has conducted a comparative thematic analysis of authoritarianism and conformity in each of the works in question. The heavy presence of authoritarian and disciplinary institutions, namely, the church, the court, the prison, and the scaffold, in both the novel and the theatrical work serves to reflect and demonstrate an equal treatment of the theme of authoritarianism. More explicitly, through applying Michel Foucault's ideas on institutional power and the function of disciplinary institutions, the analysis has disclosed that the discourse underlying the depiction of the stated settings holds assumptions of excessive and misplaced authority and aggressiveness. Additionally, the present project was undertaken to assess conformity in both works. The theoretical approach used in evaluating the characters' conformity and the various conformity processes enhance our understanding of the phenomenon and provide illustrations of the dangers of yielding to authority unquestionably. Compliance -- one of Herbert Kelman's conformity modes in which a person conforms publicly but not privately -- proves to be the dominant type of conformity. This adds evidence of the falsities that underlie authoritarian systems. Besides, highlighting conformity in the works under study directs attention to the destructive consequences of coercive conformity as it can divert the social group from 'correcting' false beliefs and ideas.

In devoting the last chapter to the protagonists of the works in question, the research set to evaluate the extent to which their resistance and deviance is successful, hence their individualism possible. In this research work, Foucauldian and Greenblattian deterministic / causality view of society, the individual, and resistance has been applied to question the truthfulness of the protagonists' non-conformity,

deviance, and inner-orientedness. The result of the analysis demonstrated that both Hester Prynne and John Proctor display individualistic qualities. Yet the romance and the play present two different cases of social resistance or disobedience; one that is passive and inward related to Hawthorne's central character, Hester Prynne, and another which is outward and open displayed by Miller's protagonist John Proctor who rebels openly. Another significant finding relates to the destination / the result of the protagonists' deviance and disobedience. More explicitly, the project assesses the outcome of their 'breaking' of the law and their deviation in quest of individual liberty and selfhood. In relation to the act of adultery, both authors seem to 'block' and 'punish' their protagonists which appears in their unwillingness to allow them a final happy ending and a reunion with their beloved. Hester's aspirations for a new beginning are undermined by Dimmesdale's death while John Proctor's final emotional reconciliation with his wife Elizabeth is cut short by his tragic execution. Since both the novelist and the playwright deprive their protagonists of a 'new beginning,' this may indicate their admittance of the power of society and some sort of social repression. Nevertheless, with respect to the protagonists' intellectual deviance, the study has demonstrated that the authors lay the door open and show unquestionable support. The romance writer allows Hester to occupy the office of a moralizer and counselor though it remains evidently a 'taboo' and a deviant behavior in the Puritan patriarchal Boston community. John Proctor dies a saint though he opposes and disobeys the laws and norms of his social group by refusing to confess holding firm his divergent vision. The reason for the authors' celebration of the protagonists' ideological disobedience is due, as the study has shown, to the 'civility' of their resistant behavior. In other words, in addition to the ideological nature of their dissent, both Hester and Proctor disobey the social code not to attain selfish ends, as it is the case with the act of adultery, but to achieve an end that is both rewarding to their sense of selfhood and to their societies as a whole. Hester devotes herself and her 'deviant' theorizing to help her community and John Proctor refuses to confess and to submit to the authorities and by acting as such, he 'protects' his family, friends, and ultimately his society. Therefore, the optimistic end of Hester and Proctor's intellectual deviance implies the authors' support to the right of practicing civil disobedience and quest for

intellectual liberty. However, Hawthorne shows ‘reluctance’ (apparent in Hester’s *outward conformity*) while Miller advocates a strong stand for disobedience in order to preserve one’s personal civil liberties, notably intellectual ones.

In comparing a nineteenth-century novel with a twentieth-century play, the research has allowed to trace the themes in question, authoritarianism and conformity along American history and literature. Eventually, it brings two trends and genres of literature together, namely American Romantic fiction and Modern Drama, the fact that demonstrates the recurrent presence of the issues under study in American society and in its literature. The findings on authoritarianism and conformity enhance our understanding of the issues, both as literary themes and sociopolitical phenomena. More significantly, the analysis of the *optimistic* fate of the protagonists’ *ideological disobedience* (due to the fact that this disobedience is *free from egotism*) indicates that the works in question, *The Scarlet Letter* and *The Crucible*, foster avant-garde perceptions about American individualism. The individualism that Hester and Proctor achieve ultimately resonates what the American sociologist Henry Murray calls ‘adulthood individualism’, that is an individualism that is more mature and free from excessive egotism.

Finally, as any academic research, this dissertation contains a number of limitations that need to be considered. First, the present study has focused mainly on two literary works from two different periods in its comparative investigation of the themes in question. Considering more literary works from other different periods in the history of the nation, for instance, American works during the 1980s, would be useful to enlarge the scope of the research. In fact, the atmosphere of the 1980s indicated similarities with the 1950s in relation to conformity. Erene Thomson states in “Individualism and Conformity in the 1950s vs. the 1980s,” that the decade knew an ‘ambiguous mixture’ of individualism and conformity, thus the atmosphere of the era indicated similarities with the 1950s. Eventually, literary works like David F. Wallace’s *The Broom of the System* (1987) may widen the study of the theme and the cultural debate between individual autonomy, social conformity, and civil liberties which are still curtailed in the U.S.

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في الأخير، بتناول رواية من أربعينيات القرن التاسع عشر و مسرحية تعود إلى منتصف القرن العشرين لا يسقط البحث الضوء على مواضيع هامة في المجتمع الأمريكي و بالخصوص قمع الحريات الفكرية و الامتثال فقط و إنما يقرب فترتين مختلفتين في التاريخ الأمريكي، يمزج بين نوعين أدبيين: الأدب و المسرح، و بين توجيهين أدبيين مختلفين و هما الدراما المعاصرة و الأدب الرومانسي الأمريكي.

أما فيما يتعلق بالاختلاف الفكري للشخصية الرئيسية لكل من العاملين الأدبيين، فنلمس ايجابية و دعما مطلقا لهما فيما يتعلق بحريتهما الفكرية بالرغم من أن أفكارهما تعتبر 'طابو' في المجتمع الذي يعيش فيه كل منهما. فبطلة الرواية تنجح، عن طريق دأبها في الأعمال الخيرية، في الحصول على منصب 'مرشدة' بعد أن كانت رمزا للخطيئة، حيث يصبح منزلها قبلة للنساء و الرجال على حد سواء طلبا للنصيحة و الإرشاد. و بذلك تتمكن من فرض نفسها و أفكارها التحريرية و من اختراق المجتمع الذكوري في بوسطن باحتلال منصب يعتبر حكرا على الرجال.

بخصوص الشخصية الرئيسية للعمل الدرامي فان المسرحي يبدي تجاوبا و دعما لبطل مسرحيته في مقاومته للسلطة، فرغم أن الأخير يموت معارضا للسلطة و ممثلي السلطة برفضه للخضوع لأمرهم إلا أن الكاتب يجعل من إعدامه نهاية بطولية.

السبب في مساندة الكاتبين لهما فيما يتعلق بالحرية الفكرية هو أن الأخيرة، بعكس الحرية الشخصية أو 'الطبيعية' التي صبا لتحقيقها بطلي العاملين بتورط كل منهما في علاقة محظورة ، خالية من النزعة الأنانية ، اي ان توجههما الفكري -- عصيانهما للحفاظ على حريتهما الفكرية -- رغم انه محظور و مرفوض اجتماعيا، إلا انه يعتبر كما أشار البحث عصيانا 'مدنيا' او عصيان لتحقيق حرية مدنية.

بالإضافة إلى ذلك فان هذا الاختلاف و العصيان ينتهي بخدمة او يصب في مصلحة المجتمع ايضا.

بالنظر إلى الدراسات في التكوين الثقافي و الاجتماعي للمجتمع الأمريكي، فان كلا من العاملين قيد الدراسة، كما يفيد البحث، يتبن أفكارا معاصرة فيما يخص إيديولوجية الفردية الأمريكية و وهو تحقيق الذات و استقلاليتها داخل المجتمع و ليس بعيدا أو مغتربا عنه.

نهج نحو الامتثال. و بذلك فان البحث يتناول سلوك البطلين الفردي و مقاومتها من هذه الزاوية

حيث يسمو البحث إلى تقييم حقيقة عدم امتثالهما و توجههما الداخلي.

كل من البطلين يبدي توجهها فردي بيد أن الرواية و المسرحية يتناولان طريقتين مختلفتين للمقاومة

و العصيان ففي الحالة الأولى المقاومة سلمية و غير مباشرة حيث ان Hester Prynne تبدي خضوعا

و امتثالا لقرارات و سلطة المجتمع و يظهر ذلك في عودتها للمجتمع و إعادة ارتدائها لشارة الخطيئة

مع الإبقاء على توجهها الداخلي و عدم إذعانها كامنا. بينما بالنسبة لبطل العمل الدرامي فالمقاومة

مباشرة و عنيفة فالأخير لا يتردد في التصدي لكل المحاولات لجعله يذعن و يخضع للسياسة المفروضة.

في الجزء الأخير من البحث، يتم تقييم مدى نجاح مقاومة البطلين و عدم امتثالهما، و بذلك مدى إرادة

الكاتبين في فتح المجال لهما لتحقيق ذاتهما و الحفاظ على اختلافهما في توجههما الفكري. فيما يخص

الجريمة الأخلاقية التي ارتكبتها البطلان نجد أن كلا من Arthur Miller و Nathaniel

Hawthorne سلبيين في موقفهما اتجاه كل من الشخصيتين. حيث أن أحلام

البطلين و رغبتهما في البدء من جديد رفقة شريكهما لا تتحقق، في الرواية بموت القس

Dimmesdale و في المسرحية بإعدام بطل الرواية الذي يأبى الرضوخ لأمر للمحكمة وهوان يعترف

بكذبة مقابل حياته ، و بذلك يكون اختياره للموت دليلا آخر لتوجهه الداخلي و تمسكه باعتقاده و فكره.

تحفظ كل من الروائي و الكاتب المسرحي في منح بطلي عمليهما بداية حب جديدة يمكن ان يعتبر

دلالة على رأي الكاتبين في ضرورة وجود بعض أساليب القمع الاجتماعي للحفاظ على مجتمع

سليم.

تعيش بطلة الرواية في عزلة مفروضة بعيدا عن المجتمع مجبرة على ارتداء شارة كرمز لخطيئتها. تحليل الشخصية يكشف أنها تتمتع باستقلالية و بعد فكري، ففي اعتمادها على نفسها و على مهنة التطريز توفر الأخيرة و تسد احتياجاتها و احتياجات ثمرة خطيئتها، بنفسها، و بذلك فتحقق استقلالية اقتصادية لم تحققه مثيلاتها في مجتمع ذكوري لا يمنح هذا الحق للمرأة. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، كمنبوذة في المنفى تطور البطلة نضجا فكريا يمكنها من الكشف عن خبايا و زيف التزمت و النقاء الديني الذي يدعيه مجتمعها. و بذلك فهي تعتبر مثالا للفرد الأمريكي الذي يحقق ذاته بعيدا عن المجتمع. الشخصية الرئيسية للعمل المسرحي يعيش في مجتمعه مخفيا حقيقة جريمته الأخلاقية و بذلك يعيش صراعا داخليا بين شعوره بالذنب لنفاقه و خوفه من فقدان سمعته بين شعبه. منذ بداية المسرحية يظهر الأخير تعارضا و مقاومة واضحة لسلوكيات مشبوهة لممثلي السلطة و بالأخص القس بسبب نفاقه الفاضح. و عند بدا السلطة في البحث و مطاردة ما كان يبدو 'ممارسة للسحر' و التمادي في اتهام الآخرين يحاول هو جاهدا تصحيح هذا الاعتقاد الخاطئ و هو ما يكلفه في الأخير الكشف عن حقيقة جريمته ، و بالتالي حياته.

من جهة أخرى، يتم أيضا في هذا الفصل تحليل الموقف المقاوم للبطلين و فرديتهما من زاوية أخرى، وذلك باعتبار رؤية سببية و حتمية للعلاقة بين الفرد و المجتمع لكل من Stephen Greenblatt و

Michel Foucault

الأول يرى بان لا وجود لاختيارات فردية لان الفرد هو نتاج للمجتمع بينما الأخير يفيد بان سلطة المؤسسات الاجتماعية تفوق قدرة الفرد و ان أي محاولة للتصدي أو المقاومة ماهي في الأخير إلا

للسلطة و استعمال النفوذ في غير محله.

لان الامتثال يعتبر نتيجة حتمية للتسلط فان البحث يهدف الى دراسة نقدية لموضوع الامتثال عن طريق

تحليل الشخصيات المدمجة في كل من العاملين الأدبيين قيد الدراسة للكشف عن مدى تقبل و امتثال

شخصيات الرواية و المسرحية للسلطة و لمعايير المجتمع.

التحليل يعتمد على دراسة الباحث الأمريكي Herbert Kelman حول أشكال و أساليب الامتثال.

تطبيق النظرية كشف عن أن أسلوب الامتثال السائد في كل من الرواية و المسرحية هو امتثال نسبي

اي توافق خارجي و اختلاف ذاتي لمبادئ المجتمع، النتيجة المذكورة تساهم في توضيح الزيف و الرياء

الذي يتواجد في ضل الأنظمة التسلطية.

البحث يبرز أيضا النتائج السلبية للامتثال من خلال تسليط الضوء على سيكولوجية الحشد و كيف

يستطيع المجتمع أن 'يضغط' على الفرد و يحدث تغييرا في اعتقادات الفرد الذي يمكن ان يتخلى عن

افكاره و اعتقاداته رغم اقتناعه بصحتها ليمتثل لاعتقادات المجتمع بالرغم من وثوقه بعدم صحتها.

المحور الثالث من البحث مخصص لدراسة الشخصية الرئيسية لكل من العاملين حيث يهدف الى تقييم

مدى نجاح مقاومة و عصيان كل من Hester Prynne و John Proctor و قدرتهما على تحقيق

ذاتهما في المجتمع الذي يعيشان فيه. تبدأ الدراسة بتسليط الضوء على الميزات التي تجعل كلا

منهما ممثلا للأيديولوجية الفردية الأمريكية و مثالا للمفهوم الأمريكي للفرد المقاوم الذي يصبو

لتحقيق ذاته و استقلاليتته بالمجتمع.

بعد الكشف عن مظاهر الامتثال و التحفظ الديمقراطي في كلتا الفترتين، يسلط البحث الضوء على دراسة نقدية للتسلط و الامتثال كموضوعين رئيسيين في كل من العاملين. تجدر الإشارة إلى أن البحث استند إلى مجموعة من الأعمال و الدراسات في مجالي علم النفس الاجتماعي و علم النفس السياسي لتوضيح و إعطاء فكرة شاملة عن مصطلحي التسلط و الامتثال و كذا طريقة استعمالهما في هذا البحث. التسلط يعتبر نظاما سياسيا يستلزم ولاء و خضوع أفراد المجتمع للسلطة بما في ذلك من قمع للحريات الفكرية. من خلال الدراسات و الأعمال المستند إليها في علم النفس السياسي، توضح أن التسلط كظاهرة معقدة يمكن أن تكون توجها أو سلوكا في بعض الأنظمة الغير تسلطية . بتعبير آخر، يمكن للمجتمع أن يظهر سلوكا تسلطيا مؤقتا دون أن يكون النظام السياسي السائد نظاما تسلطيا في الأصل، ويفيد الباحث JhonDuckitt ان المحرك الرئيسي لهذا السلوك هو بالدرجة الأولى الشعور بالتهديد. أي بوجود تيار اوسلوك فكري معاد أو مختلف عن المعايير و المبادئ التي يقوم عليها المجتمع فيشكل تهديدا لهويته مما يؤدي إلى تزايد نسبة الامتثال في المجتمع و التزمتم الفكري كنتيجة حتمية. لذلك فان البحث لا يجزم او يدعي أن الأنظمة السياسية في فترة الكاتيين كانت تسلطية و إنما بوجود ما يمكن أن يسمى: مظاهر للتسلط و الامتثال.

الدراسة النقدية لموضوع التسلط في كل من الرواية و العمل المسرحي يعتمد على تطبيق دراسة الفيلسوف الفرنسي و أفكاره عن القوة المؤسساتية و الدور الفعال للمؤسسات العقابية في ضبط السلوك الفردي و المحافضة على الإيديولوجيات و المعايير السائدة. تحليل و دراسة الأماكن المتواجدة في كل من الرواية و المسرحية أي: الكنيسة، المحكمة، السجن، و المقصلة تكشف عن استعمال مفرط

تناظر لما حدث في فترة الكاتبين.

الشخصية الرئيسية للمسرحية، John Proctor يخترق القانون الديني و المدني لمجتمعه

بتورطه بعلاقة خارج إطار الزواج، كما هو الحال بالنسبة لبطل الرواية، بيد أن مقاومته للمجتمع لا

تكمن في الجريمة الأخلاقية فحسب، فبطل المسرحية يقف ضد السياسة التي تنتهجها السلطة في

مطاردة 'السحرة' المزعومين، و يمتاز بالرغم من شعوره بالذنب بنضج ديني و فكري الى حد بعيد.

Hester Prynne، الشخصية الرئيسية للرواية، هي الأخرى تخطا بتورطها مع القس غير أنها

في غربتها المفروضة عليها من طرف مجتمعها كعقاب لها، تطور بعدا فكريا و رؤية بصيرة عن

المجتمع الذي تعيش فيه و بالأخص عن وضعية المرأة.

لان العمل الأدبي هو جزء لا يتجزأ من التاريخ فان لكل من الرواية و المسرحية محادثة مع

الإيديولوجيات السائدة في كل من الفترتين ، فبالنسبة للمسرحية فتعتبر في حد ذاتها عملا منافيا و

معارضاً للسياسة المتبعة في الولايات المتحدة في تلك الفترة.

اما الرواية فتتسم بغموض و ازدواجية في الموقف بين تعزيز للثقافة الذكورية السائدة من جهة و دعم

للحركة التحررية للمرأة، التي ظهرت في فترة الكاتب من جهة أخرى، و خاصة إذا أخذنا بعين الاعتبار

الموقف المتحفظ للكاتب اتجاه المحاولات الكتابية لمفكرات، روائيات، و مثقفات أمريكيات في تلك

الفترة.

التعصب الديني كخلفية مكانية و زمنية للعملين.

تجدر الإشارة إلى أن السلوك أو الميول التسلطي اللاديمقراطي، الامتثال، و كذا التخوف من الاختلاف

الفكري ميز سياسة أمريكا و ثقافة البلد بطريقة فاضحة في فترة منتصف القرن العشرين أي في فترة

الحرب الباردة بعد الإعلان عن وجود اختراق و تسرب شيوعي في مؤسسات الدولة حيث أن السناتور

Joseph McCarthy أعلن عن عملاء شيوعيين في الحكومة الأمريكية آنذاك و قد أطلق على تلك

الفترة التي تمت فيها مطاردة كل من له صلة بمذهب الشيوعية أو حتى المعارضين للحملة ضد

الشيوعية، اسم McCarthyism نسبة للسناتور.

غير أن الفترة الزمنية التي صدرت فيها الرواية الرومانسية *The Scarlet Letter* أي أربعينيات

القرن التاسع عشر لم تشهد وجود واضح لمظاهر التسلط خاصة التخوف من الفكر المختلف بتعبير آخر،

فترة الروائي الأمريكي أو بالضبط الفترة التي صدرت فيها روايته تميزت بظهور عدة تيارات ثقافية و

حركات تحررية و الأبرز منها الحركة التحررية للمرأة حيث برزت عدة أسماء لكاتبات أمريكيات و

مثقفات للمناداة بحقوق المرأة السياسية والاجتماعية و الاقتصادية و الفكرية. غير أن ما كان يبدو احتفاء

الولايات المتحدة بالحركة التحررية برفع شعارات المساواة بين الجنسين لم يكن سوى شعارات فارغة

نظرا لما كانت تمارسه المؤسسات الأمريكية ، الأمر الذي يؤكد أن المجتمع الأمريكي في تلك الفترة من

الزمن كان لا يزال مجتمعا ذكوريا محضا.

و لذلك فان الشخصية الرئيسية لكل من للرواية و المسرحية يمثلان محاولة للتحرر و البحث عن ذاتهما

وسط التسلط و التزمت الديني و الفكري و هو ما يجعل خلفية العملين أي القرن السابع عشر بمثابة

## ملخص المذكرة:

يتناول البحث موضوع التسلط، الامتثال، و مدى المحافظة على الذات الفردية

في الأدب الأمريكي ، في دراسة مقارنة بين رواية: *The Scarlet Letter* للروائي Nathaniel

Hawthorne و العمل الدرامي *The Crucible* للكاتب المسرحي Arthur Miller .

يهدف البحث إلى دراسة تناول الكاتبين لموضوعي التسلط و الامتثال و مدى نجاح الفرد في مقاومته و

تحقيق ذاته.

الدراسة المقارنة تستند إلى نظرية الفيلسوف Ihab Hassan و التي ترى أن تناغم الأعمال الأدبية

يكن في تشابه الظروف التاريخية، الاجتماعية و الثقافية التي تمت فيها كتابة و إصدار الأعمال الأدبية،

و بهذا يأخذ البحث منهج النقد التاريخي المعاصر و بالأخص أفكار Stephen Greblatt حول

ضرورة اعتبار و تدارس التاريخ و الإطار الزمني للعمل الأدبي في النقد الأدبي. بتفسير آخر، النقد

التاريخي لأي عمل أدبي يتم بإعطاء أهمية مماثلة للعمل و الحقبة الزمنية، و بذلك فان البحث يتطرق

إلى كتابات و إصدارات متزامنة و الأعمال الأدبية المذكورة. للإشارة، فان الكتابات التي لها علاقة

بموضوع البحث فقط هي التي تتم دراستها.

الفصل الأول للبحث يسلط الضوء على الحقبين التاريخيتين للأعمال الأدبية قيد الدراسة أي أربعينيات

القرن التاسع عشر، فيما يخص الرواية، و منتصف القرن العشرين بالنسبة للمسرحية. تتجلى

مظاهر للتسلط و الامتثال في كلتا الحقبين \_\_ رغم تفاوت الحدة \_\_ و هو ما يعكس إدراج فترة زمنية

'سوداء' في تاريخ الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية في القرن السابع عشر و المعروفة بفترة التزمت و

التسلط، الامتثال، و البحث عن الذات الأصلية

**Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* § Arthur Miller's *The Crucible***

دراسة مقارنة