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**Female Agency vs. Passivity in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* and Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*: A Comparative Study**

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master Degree in Literature and Civilization.

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## **Dedication**

I must certainly dedicate this decent work to:

- My loving parents who have always had my back.

- My lovely sister Amira and my dear brother Dhia-Eddine.

-  My friends Aida Belmehdi, and her family; and Fatima Salhi who gave friendship another meaning.

- To my role model, my high school teacher of Arabic Mr. Saleh Dram who inspired me to pursue Literature and English.

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## Abstract

Theocratic communities often provide an atmosphere for injustice against individuals, especially women. This dissertation examines the relationship between dogmatic theocracies, and oppressed women in two distinct theocratic settings; 17th century Puritan New England, and 19th century Afghan Taliban. For this purpose, the selected case studies are the female protagonists, Hester and Mariam, of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, and Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* respectively. Case studies were studied according to a set of agency and passivity devices based on textual evidence. In particular, feminist stylistics was the key theory in such study that utilized both quantitative and qualitative data analyses. Analyses obtained from the inspection of authors' syntactic choices have shown that female protagonists were primarily silenced and deprived from their power by passivity devices, albeit the use of certain agency devices. Thus, these grammatical choices served to confirm the existence of a link between women's passivized existence and their lives in extremist theocratic societies.

**Keywords**: *The Scarlet Letter, A Thousand Splendid Suns*, passivity, feminist stylistics, theocracy.

**ملخص**

المجتمعات الثيوقراطية عادة ما توفر البيئة المناسبة للممارسات غير العادلة ضد الأفراد و خصوصا النساء منهم. لذلك فإن هذه المذكرة بصدد دراسة العلاقة بين المجتمعات الثيوقراطية الدوغماتية و النساء المضطهدات في إطارين زمنيين ومكانيين مختلفين. يتمثل هذين المجتمعين في المذهب التطهيري المسيحي في إقليم نيو إنجلاند خلال القرن السابع عشر, و حركة طالبان الاسلامية في أفغانستان خلال القرن التاسع عشر. اعتمدنا على شخصية هستر في رواية "الشارة القرمزية" لناثانيال هاوثورن وشخصية مريم في رواية "ألف شمس ساطعة" لخالد حسيني كنموذجين لدراسة الوضعية. أما المنهج المتبع فهو الأسلوبية النسوية التي مكنتنا من دراسة ظاهرتي الإيجابية و السلبية اعتمادا على التحليل الكمي والكيفي للاختيارات اللغوية النحوية التي وظفها الكاتبان. النتائج المتحصل عليها بعد التحليل تظهر أن الأدوات اللغوية التي تخدم مبدأ السلبية الأسلوبي جردت البطلتين من قوتهما و صوتهما, كما غطت على الاستخدام اللغوي الإيجابي إجمالا. و بالتالي فان هذه الاختيارات اللغوية النحوية أثبتت وجود رابط بين الوجود الخاضع والمهمش للنساء و حياتهم في كنف المجتمعات الثيوقراطية المتطرفة.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الشارة القرمزية, ألف شمس ساطعة, السلبية, الأسلوبية النسوية, الثيوقراطية.

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**General Introduction**

The world has been a scene of numerous quarrels contributing to the formation of various new geopolitical, social, and economic systems, which generated ideologies that continually shaped societies' history. The quarrels were a range of political strife, economic disputes and religious dogmatism. Since religious dogmatism is often linked to theocratic governments and countries, it constituted a central theme for a fair amount of writers who endeavoured to reflect those living standards through their literary productions, and their portrayal of their societies. For instance, the transcendentalist Nathanial Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* represented 17th century Boston's conformist religious nature. The book has been approached distinctly from different perspectives by critics and scholars for a more comprehensive analysis of the society, its conformity and norms. The perspectives varied from Feminist to Psychological to Marxist readings of the account. Khaled Hosseini is another writer who portrayed 20<sup>th</sup> century Afghanistan under a fanatic movement like Taliban in his Post-modern novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. One of the issues that they described in their accounts is women's lives in oppressive communities in the name of two distinct religions: Christianity and Islam respectively. Women's resistance and fight against such theocracies varied from instantaneous reactions to repressed responses according to each woman's personality. It can be said that different societies with their respective histories have often affected different individuals in society with their tyrannical and oppressive rules under the umbrella of religions.

In conclusion, the two fictional books belonging to different literary periods and reflecting two different cultures and societies have been approached distinctly by scholars and researchers through adopting various literary approaches and different perspectives each time.

The problem to be addressed is the characters' agency and passivity through the portrayal of Mariam in *Thousand Splendid Suns* by Hosseini and Hester Prynne in *The Scarlet*

*Letter* by Hawthorne. The development of characters could be traced from compliant and obedient characters to rebellious and defiant protagonists. The problem will be discussed about female's lives in dogmatic communities where oppression and injustice are justified by a religious discourse, which was adjusted to suit the religious leaders' intentions. Thus, this research will attempt a corpus analysis of the two works to inspect stylistic features like agency and passivity, mainly to investigate extremist religious sects' dilemma and their influence on female's lives.

The dissertation's central question is: how do *The Scarlet Letter* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* portray similar realities of female subjections under the auspices of theocratic governments? In particular, this dissertation will examine three main research questions: what was the situation of puritan women in New England? What were the roles and conditions of Afghan women after the political change in Afghanistan by Taliban? What did Hawthorne and Hosseini choose as language patterns for their female characters, and how did female characters manifest agency and passivity through their speech?

This research aims at providing theoretical backgrounds of both theocratic establishments for an objective understanding of their dogmatic extremism in two different religions. Besides, the study will give an account of women under the rigid systems of Puritanism and Taliban. It will also analyse particular linguistic patterns stylistically to indicate traces of females' agency and passivity.

This study shall focus on examining religious dogmatism and rigidness in two different extremist religious sects: 17th century Salem Puritans and 20th century Afghan Taliban. More specifically, it will shed light on women's situation under both theocracies through the literary lenses of Nathanial Hawthorne and Khaled Hosseini and their portrayal of female characters.  This task shall be undertaken with a feminist stylistic approach since this research shall explore text language related to context.

This study's methodological approach is stylistic analysis where both qualitative and quantitative methods shall be utilized. This work will be qualitatively processed as for the descriptive analysis of the selected linguistic structure, whereas results will be   quantitatively approached. To collect data, this study will use *The Scarlet Letter* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* as well as other library and E-books as primary sources. Besides, secondary sources like articles, essays, encyclopaedias, previous works, or any other literature related to the topic. A selection of samples that will explicate the main research matter from the narratives will be taken into account to analyze the gathered data.

The overall structure of the dissertation takes the form of three chapters, including this introductory chapter. Chapter one begins by laying out the theoretical dimensions of the research through two sections. The first chapter will provide a theoretical framework of both novels by providing historical backgrounds of New England's puritans and women' situations under that religious sect. In addition, an overview of Taliban movement and women's status under such a dogmatic regime will be covered. The second and third chapters will include a stylistic analysis of the texts in hand to inspect and extract the textual patterns that indicate female characters as agentive or passive.

Consequently, a series of grammatical patterns will be selected to narrow the study: dynamic and stative verbs, transitive and intransitive verbs, and modal verbs. The General conclusion includes a comparison between both works' results and an evaluation of the findings. Finally, the conclusion gives a summary of the entire dissertation, and its key findings.

## Chapter 01: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

### 1.1.Literature Review

Literary studies often implement a large body of theories to explore distinct research areas whose findings enrich literature's significance. Stylistics is one of the approaches that emphasize the importance of studying literature from a linguistic perspective, mainly to put forward their convergent relationship. Thus, a succinct literature review that encompasses major contributions in this field will be provided.

### 1.1.1.  M.A.K. Halliday

A considerable amount of literature has been published on stylistic studies of literary works. One of the key studies in this field is M.A.K. Halliday's **"**An Inquiry into the Language of William Golding's *The Inheritors*," published in 1971. Using his theory of Functional Stylistics, he analyzes the stylistic function of transitivity as a syntactic choice by the author. He argues that it cements grammatical choices' role in denoting literary meanings because it produces "syntactic imagery" (Halliday 121). He bases his observations on the various transitivity uses; for example, character' acts do not affect external entities. Also, most of the time subjects come in the shape of body parts, or "inanimate objects" (123). Finally, he concludes that "the particular transitivity patterns that stand out in the text contribute to the artistic whole through the functional significance, in the language system, of the semantic options which they express" (134). Nevertheless, although Halliday's Functional Stylistics renders analytical and interpretive processes easier, the literary scholar Stanley Fish could still note one of its shortcomings. He argues that readers' response is pivotal for a richer text comprehension, especially that Halliday's theory often "involves a lot of functions and categories resulting in meaningless analysis" (Norhaslinda 1171).

### 1.1.2.  Geoffrey N. Leech, and Michael H. Short

Ten years after, in 1981, Geoffrey N. Leech and Michael H. Short published one of the significant academic landmarks of stylistics: *Style in Fiction*. Their book entails the theoretical and analytical linguistic methods that could be involved in literary analysis. Accordingly, it contains a set of quantitative studies of multiple authors' styles like Joseph Conrad, D.H. Lawrence, Henry James, and Katherine Mansfield. Based on their analyses, the agentive feature depends on syntactic and lexical choice like verbs (Leech and Short 68). In 1984, Richard D. Cureton commented that "As an introduction to literary stylistics, it has no peer" (Cureton 362). However, he observes that it would have been better if Leech referred back to his previous work's stylistic features, mainly to ensure a comprehensive explanatory account of almost all "stylistics tools" (364).

### 1.1.3.  Daniel Kies

In 1985, the linguist Daniel Kies published a paper entitled "Some Stylistic Features of Business and Technical Writing: The Functions of Passive voice, Nominalization, and Agency" where he argues that language analysis plays a pivotal role in the proper implementation of their functions (Kies 299). He reported that business and technical writing necessitate highlighted agency to overcome possible communication intricacies; hence, he concludes that "instructors and handbook authors should emphasize the use of the best sentence type to fulfil a specific function" (307). While the latter study focuses on technical writing, the next stylistic study Kies undertook focused on fiction. In 1992, he published an article under the title "The Uses of Passivity: Suppressing Agency in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*"; this detailed examination inspected a total of fourteen linguistic devices that foregrounded passivity throughout the novel. It is worth noting that this analysis explores the use of language in relation to totalitarianism ideology; such use suggests how individual and social

lives seem "futile" through passivity in "plot and dialogue, [and] Winston's mind style" (Kies, *Uses of Passivity*).

### 1.1.4. Sara Mills

Besides literary stylistics, Sara Mills developed feminist stylistics theory in her compendious book *Feminist Stylistics* in 1995 to enlarge the field of feminist studies to include language study. She designed word, sentence, and discourse as the three analysis levels a researcher could set out to analyze. For instance, analysis on the sentence level enfolds the inspection of employed transitivity choices, which affects senses of agency and passivity (Mills 98). In a 2009 journal issue, Shenli Song set out to analyze Katherine Mansfield's *Miss Brill*'s text language based on the four style levels provided by Leech and Short. Her linguistic analysis adopts the Feminist Stylistics theory to explore the author's unique craft and style, and its convergence with the female protagonist's construction (Song 117). Song concludes that obtained textual, linguistic data show that Mansfield sought to build her characters' narration and dialogues as objectively as possible. Nonetheless, Song observed that emotional narration in *Miss Brill* implied the author's emotional states, especially with the extensive use of "exquisite words, vague expressions, short emphatic exclamations, figurative languages, imagery, sound" (Song 123). Similarly, Khazai et al conducted a feminist stylistic analysis of Elizabeth Gaskell's *North and South* published in 2016. However, instead of Sara Mills' theory, they adopted Searle's theory of speech acts. In particular, they examined how Gaskell's female protagonist shaped language to assert her authority in certain contexts. They concluded that despite the female protagonist's passive, submissive character, she could still forge language to proclaim a significant power mainly "through insinuation and the use of speech acts [to achieve] her desired perlocutionary effect" (Khazai et al. 8).

On the whole, Feminist Stylistics is within the sphere of modern stylistics, which-according to Simpson- makes use of social and cultural theories in the stylistics field (Norhaslinda 1171). Additionally, a master's thesis entitled "Translating the Discourse of Alienation Orwell's Nineteen Eighty Four and Haqqi's Saint's Lamp" by Loubna Ammer enfolds an exploration of transitivity along with other syntactic choices in these books. The researcher mainly set out to inspect whether Kies' fourteen linguistic devices have preserved the same linguistic functions and properties in the Arabic translation of Nineteen Eighty Four (Ammer 46). She concludes that alienation as a concept cannot be properly grasped if one depends solely on analyzing devices apart from each other. Instead, she notes that "it is rather through the ideational resources deployed, represented by transitivity and complemented by a range of other lexicogrammatical tools" (81).

Significant researches have been carried out on Feminist Stylistics along with literary agency, and passivity devices that are utilized in fiction. However, there is a general lack of studying them to fathom their relevance in fiction works where theocratic communities are part of the settings. In specific, there is insufficient data on whether language use is manipulated in the name of religions to achieve particular ends or not.

**1.2.Historical Background of Puritans in New England**

**1.2.1.  Settlement of a Puritan Colony in New England**

One can trace Puritanism to distinct periods in the history of the English Church. Puritanism and Puritans have often been given multiple definitions and assumptions. Kay Kizer provided one of the commonly given definitions in an online article. It concludes that Puritans are reformist Protestants who sought to abide by the scripture literally. It is mainly known for its multiple attempts to convince the Church of England to return to the Bible's respective practices, instead of clinging to Roman Catholic proceedings (Kizer).

Besides, G.B Tatham elaborated a book on Puritans' history where he stated that their purification concerned the Church's distinct religious and moral reforms; rather than reforms in their individual lives and personal practices (Tatham 2). Moreover, Tatham displayed through his study some of the misconceptions related to Puritans; namely that "[...] Puritanism was not a creed endowed with defined dogmas and a constructive ecclesiastical policy; it was rather an attitude of mind which expressed itself not in one from only or with an equal degree of insistence" (2). That is to say; Puritanism cannot be possibly limited in practice and conduct. It comes in various forms where the aim for a purified English Church adhering to the rules of the Bible is the desired outcome.

According to Encyclopaedia Britannica, the leading cause of Puritans' the exile and immigration from England to its colonies was religious strife. The latter resulted from the religious intolerance and persecution of Puritans in England.  Thus, the relatively unfair and infamous religious practices done towards puritans instilled in them an urge to establish their own community ("The Editors"). In other words, they have promised themselves to found a community where they feel safe, accepted, and embraced.

Their first presumably step consisted of their collective migration with their families to New England. Given the label "The Great Migration", the Puritan operation of migration spanned ten years approximately. The reason it was glorified was its alteration from other migrations. Their endeavour seemed to be religiously driven because they longed for their own free religious puritan community, instead of only enjoying economic prosperity in England (Betlock). They intended to establish their colony that will perhaps be the haven for their fellow puritans and their supposedly next generations. In their quest for a practically puritan community, sermons and preaches undertook setting the principal cornerstones for the newly found society (Betlock). It was a time that often required constant solidarity between citizens and their preachers.

*The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism* provides a detailed account of Puritans throughout their different stages. For instance, John Winthrop was one of the puritan preachers whose name is associated with the call for unity, cooperation, and Christian values in order to succeed in their godly mission. For example, "A Model of Christian Charity" is a sermon that he delivered on the ship heading to Massachusetts (Coffey and Lim 127). His aim of such a sermon was to outline their immigration and its main principles i.e. religiously, politically, and socially.

It provided the criteria that puritan migrants should supposedly follow to achieve the societal structure that they aspired to. It included an expression that resonated among the migrants, persecuted and exiled Protestants: "A City upon a Hill". On the one hand, it suggested that the new colony would be the model that nations would hope to establish because it would be roughly different. On the other hand, if events escalated and resulted in failure, this society's failed experiment would be witnessed by numerous nations and communities (127). Yet, it was taken as a challenge more than an obstacle in the Puritans' path towards freedom.

### 1.2.1.1. Establishment of a Puritan Community

After establishing the "Massachusetts Bay Colony" ("Puritan New England"), the early 17<sup>th</sup> century collective migration of protestant families and individuals would necessitate the foundation of a solid political, religious and economic structure. To begin with, it was the religious factor that stimulated the idea of founding a practically independent land. Thus, they would combine religion and politics to set an agenda for their colony.

Since religious reforms of the Church were the triggering reasons behind the migration to a new land and colony, it was virtually suitable to start with promoting their Bible in local languages. It would help them to spread their scripture among New England's natives and to ease their God's divinely assigned mission as Christians (Puritan New England). Hence, efforts were dedicated to fulfil this responsibility and to establish a fair Puritan community.

Puritans' duty as reformist Protestant Christians consisted of abiding by the Bible's instructions to guide a religiously blessed life. However, they had not been given any precise guarantee to their worship. For instance, it has been stated in an article entitled "Puritan New England: Massachusetts Bay" that: "[...] Puritans adhered to the doctrine of predestination, whereby a few elect would be saved and all others damned. No one could be sure whether they were predestined for salvation." ("Puritan New England").

This inability to predict their future destiny had affected various aspects of their daily life. Consequently, their perception of the events surrounding their lives had approximately split into two categories: they either occurred as an indicator of God's punishment or grace. One of the examples illustrated in the article is: "Hundreds were accused of witchcraft in Puritan New England, including townspeople whose habits or appearance bothered their neighbours or who appeared threatening for any reason" ("Puritan New England"). It had roughly extended to suspect citizens' Christian behaviours and practices. Since they believed

in the probable redemption of God, if they walked down the right path, they appeared strict against religious violations.

### 1.2.2. Theocracy in Puritan Massachusetts Bay

According to the online dictionary Merriam-Webster, theocracy is a governing system of certain countries whose leaders are religious men ("Theocracy"). Such a form of government was presumably Massachusetts' governing system. One of the first steps towards the political formation of New England's colony was the 1629's accorded contract. The latter consisted of the control of a group of investors, also called freemen, on the issues of the new colony (Coffey and Lim 128). As an illustration, Steven Cooke defined a freeman as the man who belonged to the Protestant Puritan Church; he had not any obligations like debt, slavery, or any sort of offense.

The term can be traced back to the 12th century, yet it was apparently popularized in Puritan Massachusetts Bay colony (Cooke). Apparently, their accepted status granted them considerable privileges in the new colony, where they were meritorious of the leaders' position. In order to give a clear record of some of their provided merits, Marcia Stewart approached the issue in a website article entitled "The Freemen of Massachusetts Bay 1630 – 1636" as follows:

> The Freemen were the only colonists who were franchised to vote, and the franchise was not offered to all .One generally had to be a mature male church-member, and must have experienced a transforming spiritual experience by God's grace, as attested by himself and confirmed by church leaders. (Stewart)

Their governance occurred in the form of constant meetings at the level of Cambridge University, where they assigned a governor with his assistants as decision-makers. However, it would not take long until the above group of freemen moved to the heart of the colony

instead of a remote control (Coffey and Lim 128). Since the moving group consisted of quite a few members, John Winthrop allowed adult males who met the necessary eligibility requirements to be involved in the power and control process. Nevertheless, the latter decision lasted for a remarkably short period before church membership became a core condition (129). Therefore, the consequential changes and challenges in the eligible leaders' criteria led to the foundation of a two-chambered body of legislation.

One of the chambers consisted of assistants who were assigned by the freemen on the level of each community. The latter had to swear an oath of allegiance where they promised to sustain peace in the colony, to stay loyal to the Commonwealth, and to protect the colony's government from any possible conspiracies. On the other hand, the other chamber included deputies who were sent to the general court each meeting session as representatives of the freemen (129). In other words, the colony officials, including privileged freemen, appointed assistants and eligible adult males who worked collectively to acquire a solid political ground, which usually connected with religion.

After the restriction of government leadership to include only Church members, gatherings and congregations had taken place in Massachusetts. These congregations included a teacher to explain the scripture and a priest to give sermons on correct life conduct. However, such congregations were not accountable neither for a certain superior authority nor other congregations (131). The latter generated suspicion of religious chaos or anarchism, but the assigned pastors and teachers were presumably a selection of the fittest and finest men to accomplish such missions.

On the other hand, opinions were pronounced on the possible necessity of holding discussions to decide upon appropriate and inappropriate conduct of community members. The discussions members consisted of tolerant and intolerant puritans (141). That is to say,

some of the participants were relatively biased and narrow-minded when it came to certain regulations and compromises between state and Church like Roger Williams.

Hence, it is assumed that Roger Williams was an aspiring puritan leader who migrated to Boston with a clear plan for the godly community. According to Francis J. Bremer in his book "First Founders: American Puritans and Puritanism in an Atlantic World", Williams argued for the complete separation between Church and state, which indicated his radical views concerning the purification of Church. His plan for the Church was likely to reach the ultimate level of purification where state officials had not any relations with Church's religious matters, and clergymen with pastors had not any relations with state's daily life issues (Bremer 39). Besides, his radical views extended to compel women to wear a veil whenever they headed to Church or to a foreign land. According to Williams, women had to wear veils as an allusion to their inheritance of Eve's sin and depravity.

Also, one of his claims was to forbid clergymen and preachers to accompany sinners in times of worship. Moreover, he suggested that the oath of allegiance should only be allowed for regenerate puritans and not for unrepentant sinful men (69). Nevertheless, after his steadfast views concerning a pure church reached an approximately extreme level, some leaders sought to stop the spread of his intentions. Consequently, the general court decided to expel him from Massachusetts by October of 1635 (Coffey and Lim 133). All in all, life in a Puritan community during the 17th century required some efforts to be considered a faithful, pure, and saint Protestant.

Hence, indispensable duties tended to be highlighted for community members. Namely, Church meetings were obligatory, and certain punishments were pronounced in case of absence ("Puritan Life"). Also, certain sins like adultery were renounced, and adulterers were publicly humiliated generally. Sometimes, they were obliged to wear the letter A as a sign of adultery. Despite the firm reaction of tolerant Puritans against the radical view of

Roger Williams, yet they did not oppose his conduct of women. Thus, the situation of women in a newly founded colony has been subjected to a number of rules, roles, and behaviours.

### 1.2.3. Women in Puritan New England

The structure of the Puritan families and their critical settlement period gave women respective roles. In other words, the colony foundation's period tended to require a distinct set of responsibilities from women (Reis xii). They were usually more involved in terms of work because their skills were needed. Thus, they were somehow recognized as performers of unconventional duties, unlike other women in other puritan settlements. Yet, their lives could not escape the patriarchal hegemony because they were endowed with a low percentage of mortality. Hence, the more men lived, the more women suffered (Allen). Thus, marriages and childbirth were relatively encouraged. Young people seemed to marry in their twenties, and childbirth practically took place every two years.

In her book "Damned Women", Elizabeth Reis undertook the examination of women's situation in the 17th century Puritan environment. She states in its preface that: "[...] despite its patriarchal quality, Puritanism seems to have offered women unique opportunities for involvement, even leadership." (Reis xiii) Nevertheless, such opportunities partially held in disguise patriarchal intentions of superiority.

### 1.2.3.1. Religious and Political Role

Despite assigning man as the head of religious and political matters, it is believed that Puritans have given women some appropriate roles. The religious and political roles given to women suited their capacities and situations virtually. To begin with, Reis stated in her book that women could not practically be involved in governance and congregation affairs. However, they have been granted certain privileges like exercising their right to be Church

members. Other duties could be inspecting the Bible and teaching its meaning, especially in their homes. Also, they could both convert people and baptize children (Reis xiv). These responsibilities tend to offer them a decent status in their respective households and societies because they could accelerate the process of founding Winthrop's dream, "A City upon a Hill". Thus, women could still relatively use their influence in certain situations - although indirect- in spite of the patriarchal grip.

It is suggested that according to Puritan theology, a women's image is different from a man's image in terms of representation. For instance, Amanda Porterfield devotes a book entitled *Female Piety in Puritan New England* to discuss aspects of Puritan women's lives in New England. The author suggested that women represented God's motherly care and attention respective to their essential roles as mothers; Whereas men represented God's fatherly authority and responsibility respective to their actual roles, too (Porterfield 81). That is to say; women were usually perceived as weak regarding their innate, motherly, and emotional nature.

According to Puritans, The latter nature indicated that women tended to be irrational in terms of state governing and decision making. Thus, a woman's power could only suffice for labouring and raising children according to the Christian instructions. Hence, religiously speaking, women had limited practices in the Puritan community. The allowed tasks ranged roughly from church membership to baptism and Bible instruction. Yet, they continued to be men's subjects since men are the earthly figures of God.

It is suggested that Puritanism is built upon predestination, where God had already divided believers into two categories: the damned and the redeemed. Thus, people could not know their category until doomsday. However, instead of surrendering to their predestined fates, people practically sought to find alternatives for redemption (Reis 1). Hence, one of their most fears tended to be damnation, especially women. That is to say, Puritan

communities considered the sins of men differently from women's. In a nutshell, women were seen as more accessible to Satan due to their inferiority from men and their sinful natures.

Thus, their religious duty consisted of devoting themselves to only Christ; in addition, they practically needed to demonstrate their strong resistance to Satan's temptation (Reis 3). In other words, despite having equal status with men before God, women did not virtually enjoy the same position in their respective societies, and they had to prove their worthiness of Christ's redemption and salvation.

However, at certain instances of radical Puritanism, a group of women believed that they were superior to men. Their belief emanated from their assumption of being Godly creatures where they received direct revelations from God. Consequently, they tended to use this belief to their favour, especially in courts. For instance, Anne Hutchinson used receiving revelations as an argument in court. Basically, she declared that judicial officers would receive a curse if they proceed in her trial, yet magistrates decided upon banishing her (Coffey and Lim 136). Hence, some women could not even accept an equal position to men, but they presumed they enjoyed a divinely granted status described in Female Piety in Puritan New England as "mystical union with God" (Porterfield 84). Hence, they practically involved themselves in religiously important positions of instructing, leading, and preaching about Christian matters that were exclusive to men. However, they were not presumably celebrated in their respective communities because they presented a threat to the patriarchal authority and the fatherly figure of God. Thus, a considerable number of such women were opposed, banished, and charged with strong accusations that discredit them as good Christians.

### 1.2.3.1.1.  Anne Hutchinson

One of the prominent radical Puritans was Anne Marbury Hutchinson, a preacher who went against the Puritan guideline provided to women. Basically, her view was practically inspired by Cotton's covenant of Grace, and her idea of belief and redemption seemed distinct, for she separated faith from practice (Cullen-DuPont 121). It only required the devotion of one's consciousness to reach a level of union with God, which would presumably lead to one's salvation. Consequently, her quest for religious freedom pushed her and her family to migrate to Massachusetts, where, contrary to the Hutchinson family's wish, the Puritans did not approve of them like their values dictated on them. Hence, their attempt to be integrated into the community likely failed.

That is to say, Anne Hutchinson, through her preaching and teaching, provoked the male authority that restricted such acts to only males (Cullen-DuPont 121). For instance, she had been declared nearly blasphemous and guilty in court where John Winthrop stated that: "you have maintained a meeting . . . that hath been condemned . . . as a thing not tolerable nor comely in the sight of God nor fitting for your sex" (121). Thus, her endeavour to lead sermons for both sexes at her house outraged the strict preachers who accused and tried her constantly. Mainly because she did not accept, according to the Scripture, the restrictions called upon women and the natural role they had been endowed with.

In this specific case, theological accounts of sermons attributed to Anne Hutchinson consist of the relatively talent that she seemed disposed of concerning her word choice. Her words had been described as influential, potent, and lasting in the ears of those who attended her conferences. Yet, after her constant adamant resistance against all the attempts to stop her from proceeding in her weekly sermons, Anne's religiously themed and literarily crafted words kept on fighting the system. Thus, John Cotton, the Puritan minister and preacher of

"Covenant of Grace" (Cullen-DuPont 121), who used –at first- to be pleased with his acquaintance with the Hutchinson couple, stated the following:

> [...] from the conference of this our Sister and by your converse with her and from her it may be you have received helps in your spiritual estates, and have been brought from resting upon any duties or works of righteousness of your own. But let me say this to you all, and to all the Sisters of other Congregations. Let not the good you have received from her, make you to receive all for good that comes from her; for you see she is but a Woman and many unsound and dangerous principles are held by her (Coffey and Lim 301).

Hence, her participation was viewed as a threat to the patriarchal hegemony of the community. Also, it would incite Puritan women to break off the chains and constraints that distanced them from roughly most authoritarian positions. Thus, Anne's tenacious and unyielding character filled Puritans with hatred. Consequently, she was accused of transgressing against a number of religious principles and eventually called to stand a trial several times. After her accusations were proven true by the ministers who judged her, Anne was to be banished, isolated before she was killed. Presumably, after Anne, accompanied by her family, left Massachusetts Bay to Narragansett Bay (or Rhode Island), then to New York, native Indians planned to dispose of them and killed them all except one family member.

Despite the fact that she was executed by the Natives, the news of Hutchinson's death rejoiced the Puritans, who were perhaps behind the elimination plan (Bercovitch 197). Yet, in spite of the devoted efforts to limit the spread of influence of Hutchinson's theological radical ideas, some women seemed rather persistent in their fight against the patriarchal hierarchy, such as Katherine Finch (Cullen-DuPont122). All in all, Anne Hutchinson could reveal to women their real power if they choose to act for themselves, but in her journey towards her target, she often faced different kinds of struggles, problems, and opponents. While certain

women would have abandoned their goal due to said circumstances, she chose to defy her psychological and physical capacities until the end.

### 1.2.3.2.Domestic Role

Families in Puritan New England were considered as smaller churches because of their sacred status. First, the family structure was believed to be an allusion to the Christian community where a man performed as the head, and a woman performed as his substitute once he was absent. Hence, men were responsible for making decisions on the level of congregational meetings, and for working and providing essential daily life necessities for their households.

However, women were assigned as teachers of the scripture for their children, as pure caring Christian wives for their husbands, and as keepers of their families' peace. Despite being subordinated to men in their marital relationships, women were relatively considered important elements in the marriage institution. It was suggested that Puritan marriages were dependent on equality between the couple where feelings of security, friendship, and trust could be cultivated (Porterfield 82). This indicated that despite not being allowed to govern or become head of Church and congregation, women could still govern their homes and become the head of their households' affairs as it was stated by Samuel Willard: "tho the Husband be the head of the wife, she is an head of the family" (qtd in. Reis xiv). All in all, Puritans could have assumed that God did not consider a woman as inferior to a man, but as equal to him. Nonetheless, women seemed to be a governed element when it came to men for different reasons.

Namely, the status of marriage in the community was blessed where God had distinguished it as a divine micro institution. Its purpose was relatively patriarchal because wives, along with children, were supposed to be subjects to the father's authority (Porterfield

25). However, women and children could not practically consider their subjection as a punishment, but rather as a protection and an experience of true Christianity. Besides, husbands and wives were to receive Godly blessings, as Porterfield reports John Cotton's view after his marriage with Elizabeth Horrocks: "God made that day a day of double marriage to me" (Porterfield 88). Hence, God would grant his blessings to those who are married because they withhold their bodies from forbidden sexual practices. In Puritan New England, men sought God's love, and women sought a good Christian status. Therefore, some critics suggest that women were not practically unwillingly oppressed and muted, but rather found their voices in that subjection to their husbands.

### 1.2.3.3. Economic Role

Considering the circumstances of 17th century New England, Puritans were to face multiple struggles in their way towards a nearly perfect community. Thus, women's force was relatively needed to fulfil different tasks, which were mostly economic. To begin with, women were assigned similar responsibilities to men as far as founding a perfect Puritan community is concerned. For instance, they were supposed to maintain gardens, to butcher and milk animals, and to trade in markets (Reis xii). Thus, they were performing an unusual role as women living under a theocracy, but that corresponded to the time necessities. In her book entitled *Working Life of Women in the 17th century,* Alice Clark indicates that women's occupations were generally house-based, where houses were industrialized. That is to say; women considered the long hours they spend at home like an opportunity to help in economic matters.

They manufactured different products, prepared them for the market, and supervised the entire process until its completion. Hence, they enjoyed a decent status as employees who could provide economic support to their households (Reynard vi). However, their valued

contribution merely from their houses would not last long, especially after New England shifted from the agricultural industry to the industrial economy. Thus, there once appreciated efforts, and manual labour ceased to be required anymore, while elaborate manufacturing services were generally encouraged (Hartman 4). In spite of their limited roles, women were still apparently able to benefit from their family's patriarchal institutions. They could not only occupy posts in the latter familial institutions, but also work solo from home making money from getting people's laundry done.

Besides, most commonly, women tended to be midwives, and nurses looking after their innate motherly natures (Bloch 245). In addition to such occupations, one particular mission would be their responsibilities of the threshold on behalf of only their absent husbands. Yet, apart from any relatively male-related mission or job, women could hardly find any opportunity at all, especially if they aimed for independence and self-reliance. In other words, women could not possibly expect to exercise any right without being under the control of men, whether husbands or fathers. It is worth mentioning that wealthy women could be discredited and disgraced in courts if they were found free from male guardians (Hartman 5). Therefore, such women could provoke certain witchcraft, adultery, or immorality accusations. Consequently, women were obliged to be economically subordinated to men inside and outside their houses by contributing to the financial sufficiency.

The latter depended on women's domestic services like household management in times of husband's absence, launching their careers as nurses and midwives, or starting small businesses in their houses like receiving others' laundry. However, according to legislation, any earned wage would go straight to the husband because it was his right (Bloch 244). In addition, it is also believed that women were deprived of their properties once they were married. So, generally, any kind of property a married woman possessed or inherited directly became her husband's, which would leave her with nothing until he died. Yet, even after his

death, widows' court representations were far less considered than in the case of being male-accompanied.

Hence, widows were obliged to remarry because if women were economically independent, the Puritan patriarchy would feel threatened (Hartman 6). Consequently, women were usually integrated into men the minute of marriage, by Godly order and court law. In other words, the Church defined women as obedient subjects to their God and husbands, and laws confined them in the shadow of their husbands. For instance, wives were no longer conceived as individuals but as parts of their husbands, which made them live with their husbands' identities from then on (8). Namely, all their lives' matters were usually related to that of their husbands without their consent because marriage was the ultimate consent.

### 1.2.4. Women's Literature in Puritan New England

It is believed that literature had a place in each rising civilization. Hence, Puritans had had their share of literature in its various forms like prose and poetry accounts, or Bible inspection and teaching by well-known priests like Winthrop. It is suggested that, in spite of their tendency to use simple and plain literary style, Puritans seemed predisposed to also utilize metaphorical and figurative language (Bercovitch 188), mainly because they enjoyed a certain taste of arts and literature. Consequently, their divine mission to teach and preach could not eliminate their appreciation of style and language.

According to *the Cambridge History of American Literature,* Puritan literature not only involved the usual literary records like "history, poetry, and captivity narratives", but consisted also of "sermons, diaries, letters, trial transcripts, religious tracts, and broadsides"(189). However, despite their artistic knowledge, Puritans seemed intolerant to literary compositions that were not inclusive of a religiously influential theme. Their aim focused on rendering literary and aesthetic tools in service of their preachers and their

sermons, since they would prove efficient to serve Holy and divine missions. Yet, it is worth mentioning that this part will shed light on women's literature and writings in particular; at the same time when some prominent ministers used the female element of their respective community as a deprecating tool.

For instance, Winthrop, in his Pamphlet *A short story of the rise, reign, and ruin of the Antinomians, Familists, and libertines that infected the churches of New-England,* declares Anne Hutchinson as blasphemous and labels her as the American Jezebel. According to Merriam-Webster, the latter is the name of the "Phoenician wife of Ahab [who was] an impudent, shameless, or morally unrestrained woman" ("Jezebel"). So, he basically utilized his decent clerical position and his patriarchal dismissal of women preachers to disapprove of the midwife Anne Hutchinson, which he later enjoyed her death (Lawson-Peebles 100). Apart from the male literary accounts, certain female figures like Anne Bradstreet, Sarah Goodhue, and Mary Rowlandson were quite known for their literary participation in their respective Puritan community. These and other women could appropriate themselves to a literary position in that patriarchy.

### 1.2.4.1.Anne Bradstreet

According to the *Encyclopaedia of Women's History in America*, Anne Dudley Bradstreet is the author of the very first published body of poetry in America. Her story as a New Englander started as her family settled in the new colony along with other new migrants (Cullen-DuPont 31). Hence, the poet explored the realm of words and figurative language by transforming her life as a Puritan woman into words. The attributed roles to women apparently varied from tender midwives to caring householders, loyal partners, child bearers, and submissive elements in general. Accordingly, Anne Bradstreet sought to construct a wordy sanctuary and an outlet for her in times of need, and the subject matter of her poems

seemed to involve her love for her husband, her children, and ultimately God. To illustrate, Anne's idea of God consisted of associating his figure with the worldly husband as well as the father by stating the following: "thy maker is thy husband. Naymore, I am a member of His body, he my head" (Coffey and Lim 300).

The poet seemed to have opted for a more resilient journey than, for instance, Anne Hutchinson, who was relatively unquenchable and unwilling to surrender her fight. Therefore, it is suggested that her poems revolved around demonstrating the life and journey of Puritan migrant families, women in particular. Women, in general, and pregnant women, in specific, tend to share the dread of children delivery, and so did Bradstreet. Yet, according to Puritans, apparently physical pain and suffering would guarantee God's Grace (Porterfield 107). In accordance with the *Poetry Foundation* website, some of her famous poems are:

> *Upon a Fit of Sickness, Anno, The Tenth Muse, To My Dear And Loving Husband, Of The Four Ages of Man, A Letter to Her Husband, As Weary Pilgrim*, *Before the Birth of One her Children, An Exact Epilogue of the Three First Monarchies, The Author to her Book* ("Anne Bradstreet").

Namely, Anne Bradstreet practically owes her lasting reputation to the craftiness of her work. She explores the mechanisms of the human soul to cope with the struggles and hardships that she, and her family, and every similar family were bound to face and overcome. In addition, she exploits multiple other subjects like religion, death, history, and culture. So, she displays her thoughts and emotions in the form of verses (Cullen-DuPont 31). *The Prologue* is suggestively one of the noteworthy poems written by her because it could demonstrate her relatively exquisite mastery of poetry. To exemplify, the poem can be described as a witty compilation of verses that could be called –later- a feminist itinerary; some lines are as follows:

### 1.2.4.1.1. 5th Stanza

I am obnoxious to each carping tongue

Who says my hand a needle better fits.

A Poet's Pen all scorn I should thus wrong,

For such despite they cast on female wits.

If what I do prove well, it won't advance,

They'll say it's stol'n, or else it was by chance. (Anne Bradstreet)

### 1.2.4.1.2. 7th Stanza

Let Greeks be Greeks, and Women what they are.

Men have precedency and still excel;

It is but vain unjustly to wage war.

Men can do best, and Women know it well.

Preeminence in all and each is yours;

Yet grant some small acknowledgement of ours. (Anne Bradstreet)

These lines demonstrate the poet's advocacy of her Puritan women and their rights. Her way of putting her thoughts on paper was probably a quintessential step in the making of her legacy, mainly because she did not virtually attack men, yet acknowledged their position, and demanded that women should be acknowledged too ( Lawson-Peebles 102). To sum up, Bradstreet took a different road from Hutchinson's because she adopted a logical and premeditated path in her way to recognition. She chose language to encapsulate her reflections, ideas, and morals and aimed at reasserting the value of women in her community.

### 1.2.4.2. Sarah Goodhue

Often, the lives of literary figures in the newly formed colony during the 17th century could not be described as enjoying an approximately suitable atmosphere, especially for

women. Apart from certain strong-willed and resolute female figures who occasionally took it as a challenge to make their voices heard like Hutchinson and Bradstreet, a decent number of other women would not afford to risk it against the Church, its ministers, and its guidelines. Yet, the case with Sarah Goodhue was relatively distinct in certain ways.

According to *the Cambridge Guide to Women's Writing in English*, Sarah Whipple Goodhue is the author of "one of only four texts attributed to women published in 17th century New England" (Sage et al. 281). *Valedictory and Monitoring Writing* is, suggestively, a compilation of her prose and poetry that she composed before giving birth to her twins. She started recording her words and thoughts because she anticipated her death. Thus, the account constitutes of the Puritan principles and fundamentals that, she claimed, are crucial to maintaining the family order. Namely, she tended to advocate for the Patriarchal family type where children were to obey both their God and their father; while also giving value to their mother and her tender and directive presence in their lives (Hall 181). In addition to family, Sarah appeared interested to accord the domestic life, which was the responsibility of Puritan women, religious value and purpose. Accordingly, her account contains verses dedicated to all her children, where she embeds the grains of obedience to their father and God presumably. Besides addressing her children, Sarah devotes a section to her husband where she expressed her appreciation, respect, and love for him. It is worth noting that Sarah's prediction of her death after labour was proven right, making *A Valedictory and Monitory Writing* her last account that was published in 1681, the year of her death ( Sage et al. 281). All in all, Sarah Goodhue is a published Puritan author that used her pen and words to suggest that women could not be confined to a certain role only, yet they could be household keepers, loyal partners, guiding parents, as well as pen holders. She tended to assert the Puritan values related to the domestic and religious life by preserving those principles in her respective atmosphere among her family members.

### 1.2.4.3.Mary Rowlandson

Mary White is probably one of the significant authors in the history of American literature, especially the Puritan. Mainly because she could establish an entirely novel literary genre called the "captivity narrative" (Hall 282). Mary White was twice married, and her name went from Mary White Rowlandson to Mary White Talcott. Also, like several other Puritan families, Mary's family also immigrated to New England's colony by 1639, where she married a minister, Joseph Rowlandson, and founded her own family.

However, her settled family life relatively changed after an incident of assault, murder, and captivity in her town by Native Indians. Mary Rowlandson, unlike other captives who were released, she spent several months "with and was the servant of Weetamoo of the Pocassets and her husband, Quanopen, a chief of the Narragansets" (Bercovitch 264). And, during her period of captivity, Mary assumed that the confinement incident and the death of her relatives was part of God's plan, and she often associated her relatively rough experience with redemption and freedom from sin.

Thus, she usually spent her time on recalling her committed sins, overlooked prayers, and missed sermons and other religious practices where she states: "I then remembered how careless I had been of God's holy time, how many Sabbaths I had lost and misspent, and how evilly I had walked in God's sight"( 265). Besides, she generally believed that God had put her to endure hard times only to purify her and demonstrate divine love to her, in spite of her corrupt soul (265). Hence, she appeared ready to adapt to the new situation and find the path back to God; for instance, she tended to read the Bible's verses with a repentant soul and attempted to find passages from the Bible that parallel her experience. Accordingly, after being liberated by ransom, she seemed willing to record her predestined divine adventure to the public.

She is notably known for her work *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God,* the prose work was published in 1682, and it apparently became known as the longest exhaustive account written by a woman in the 17<sup>th</sup> C New England. It is a composition that contains a relatively descriptive historical record of the war between Natives and colonists known as "King Philip's war" (Hall 282). In addition, it is a record of her long weeks of captivity full of spirituality, religiosity, and confidence in God's plans to return her to the righteous path. While the Indian raid was launched on various grounds like political, economic, and religious, Rowlandson seemed to focus more on the religious factor, believing that she was the target behind this assault.

Therefore, she both attempted to demonstrate and assert Puritan theology to her Puritan public and her reunion with God's grace after this period of faith trail and recalled her experience with the Natives. The latter were generally portrayed as mere intruders, savages, killers, uncivilized, and the "Other" by colonists. However, in Rowlandson's account, she suggests that one's view of the different others as inferior and savage is a stereotypically constructed and deduced view that one generally adopts. Consequently, throughout her narrative, she takes the reader in her journey of living, dealing, and getting acquainted with the Natives. As an illustration, in *The Cambridge History of American Literature, Vol.1*, Scavan Bercovitch comments as follows: "[...] she even recognizes that the Indian may view her as savage" (Bercovitch 267). All in all, Mary White Rowlandson was a Puritan author who believed God had designed for her a journey towards his faith and grace; she assumed that her abduction was a part of a divinely set plan. Hence, she recorded her whole journey and instructed the Puritan community through her words of faith and belief in God, and those words were often loaded with instances of hard times, patience, and endurance she had sustained. The literary community virtually owes her the creation of new genre of captive narrative that continues to constitute a significant pillar in American literature.

**1.3.Historical Background of Taliban in 20th Century Afghanistan**

The international scene witnessed the birth of a myriad of political, economic, and religious factions that sought to enforce their relevant agendas. In specific, terroristic theocratic regimes like Al-Qaida and Taliban had been relatively famous after the 9/11 attacks on the U.S. The attacks resulted in an additional focus on national securities and on any susceptible terrorist group forming. According to *Taliban Narratives: the Use and Power of Stories in the Afghanistan Conflict,* Taliban is the plural form of the Pashto and Arabic word "Talib" whose meaning is "seeker of knowledge, or student." These students used to seek knowledge in the Islamic schools "madrassas" that were designed to provide an orthodox Sunni understanding of Islam. However, the formal establishment of Taliban as a religious and political group was announced by 1994 (Johnson xxvii). The continuous group wars in Afghanistan that turned this Taliban faction from knowledge seekers to peacemakers, yet in an unprecedented way. Especially that Taliban leaders presumably used Islam as their tool to persuade the Afghan people in general to join their founded community, and people often responded positively.

Generally, the country's political atmosphere was already occupied with civil war, where different warlords ruled different parts of the country. Hence, incidents of violence, robbery, kidnapping, and different sorts of power abuse were common. The prevailing situation led a group of "madrassa" students, who opposed the communist government of Najibullah and groups of armed insurgents, to consider possibilities of change (Rashid 21). Thus, they decided to form their group of Mujahideen under the name of the Taliban and plan their program. The purpose behind the name Taliban is presumably to distinguish themselves from other Mujahideen factions and to exclude their union from political intentions (22). Their protocol usually consists of laws, rules, and goals that radically adhere to the Islamic religious rules. Their chief purpose is to establish a new Afghanistan that abides by the strict

laws of Sunni Islam by declaring themselves as fighters for peace, justice, and religion. Therefore, they employed their acquired knowledge about Islamic societies and battlefields to establish peace all over the country and found a radical Sunni theocracy. Their assigned leader was Mullah Omar, a "Robin Hood figure" (25), who could influence the members with his "piety and unswerving belief in Islam" (23). In brief, members of Taliban seemed determined to achieve their ultimate religious utopia by using religious discourse as a means of propaganda to extend their group. However, it is believed that their practice was not based on the Islamic notions of a peaceful society.

The beginning of Taliban was relatively felicitous due to multiple incidents that gave credibility to the organization. For instance, the leader Mullah Omar virtually declared that Taliban aimed at establishing peace even if it meant pointing arms towards the enemy, and his words were as follows:

> We took up arms to achieve the aims of the Afghan Jihad and save our people from
> 
> further suffering at the hands of the so-called Mujaheddin. We had complete
> 
> faith in God Almighty. We never forgot that. He can bless us with victory or plunge us
> 
> into defeat. (23)

He gained quite a trustworthy reputation after several heroic acts like saving kidnapped and assaulted children, besides his refusal of any materialistic endowments or magnifying praises. Indeed, he invited his fellow citizens to join him in his battle against evil (Rashid 25). The first list of leaders accompanying Mullah Omar included his colleagues from the religious schools; they were Mohammed Rabbani, Ghaus, and Hassan. Their goal was to dominate the parts of Afghanistan that were ruled by different rulers. Hence, their first move approximately started from occupying Kandahar in 1994, and then expanded their interest to the rest of the country where they controlled Herat in 1995 and Kabul in 1996 (29-33).

Nevertheless, the larger their movement expanded, the more fighters were needed. Nonetheless, Mullah Omar's invitation of Muslims in and out of Afghanistan to join the "Jihad" was positively endorsed. Since the ultimate goal in Taliban's agenda tended to be promoting Islamic laws, justice, and protection, eventually, Afghani and Pakistani people were infatuated and became members.

Although the first small group often had an organized plan and dedicated leaders, they could not adjust to the community's enlargement where problems of organization practically occurred (Linschoten and Kuehn 69). Initially, Taliban started autonomously, but it would receive international support as it broadened its rule. For instance, according to the website of *BBC News*, an article entitled "Who are the Taliban?" states that Taliban was supported and recognized by "Pakistan [...] along with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)" ("Who are the Taliban?"). Practically, Pakistan's close geographic and ethnic ties with Afghanistan repeatedly alluded to their assumed association. Besides, the leaders of Taliban often prioritized the military and religious part and neglected the political and economic part due to their insufficient knowledge of the fields. Thus, in his book *The Taliban Revival*, Hassan Abbas estimates an additional proof of Pakistan's political support and Saudi Arabia's economic support (Abbas 68). Also, those religious schools could only provide religious courses in addition to a comprehensive understanding of the Prophet Mohammed's society. Therefore, the students could acquire limited and basic knowledge of other fields, which presented fertile ground for fellow Pakistani leaders to display their aid.

In the course of events, the leader of al-Qaeda Osama Bin Laden returned to Afghanistan. Thus, Taliban leaders developed close relations with him and benefited from his vast network. His return was purposeful because he aimed at establishing his organization in his homeland, and February 23rd, 1998, was the formal inception of Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. Being Aware of Taliban struggles, Bin Laden offered 3 million $ to financially support and

prospectively guarantee their friendliness (Abbas 73). Consequently, fundamentalist groups with similar aims sought to enforce their view of Islamic, peaceful, and thriving societies through hostility.

### 1.3.1. Fundamentalism

Although Taliban's militants attended "madrassas" where thorough religious guidance was provided, it is believed that their claim of strict implementation of Sharia, i.e., religious law, was different. They intended to adapt their interpretation of religious rules, in the name of Islam, to the Afghan society (Johnson xxviii). Their successive failures started to appear once their promises proved to be delusions like their inability to "creat[e] jobs, creat[e] or maintain[...] infrastructure [...] inability to bring prosperity and hope to the nation, their draconian policies toward women" (xxviii). Perhaps, one of the first incidents that demonstrated their contradictory assumptions and values was the execution of the former Afghan president Najibullah.

Preceding this event, Najibullah had successively called for the United Nation's immediate rescue and help to escape from Kabul, yet he went without an assuring response. Consequently, he had been captured, tortured, and hanged in the most monstrous ways (Rashid 49). They could justify their inhumane act by allocating blame and accusations on his crimes and communist ideas. Nevertheless, this monstrosity was met with reprimand both from Afghan citizens and the international scene. In his book, Ahmed Rashid expressed his utmost condemnation of the act by stating: "the mutilation of Najibullah's body was beyond the pale of any Islamic injunction, while the lack of a fair trial and the public display of the bodies revolted many Kabulis" (50). This chaos resulted in an overnight alteration of life inside Afghanistan because the Taliban did not practically consider the multitude of manifested warnings.

Before the Taliban's settlement, Afghanistan consisted of distinct coexisting and tolerating religious communities for a relative period. According to the United States Department of State's 2014 report, Afghanistan tended to encompass 80% Sunni Muslims of the population and about 19% Shia Muslims. The latter often included Ismailis and Hazaras, as well as 1% of other religious groups, including Sikh and Hindu. In addition to that, communities of Bahai, Christians, and the Jewish minority added to Afghanistan's diversity ("United States Department of State"). Nevertheless, the launch of the civil war segmented that ethnic and religious unity and Taliban's establishment as a "Sunni Hanafi sect" came to ensure their dogmatic intentions, despite the sect being "the most liberal of the four Sunni schools of thought" (Rashid 83). Some of their first displayed steps consisted of opposing the rule of communist Kabul leaders, besides persecuting the multitude of non-Muslims and non-Pashtuns' factions. In summary, Taliban fighters arrogated to themselves the mission to annihilate any disparate group that adopted contradicting beliefs and behaviors under Jihad's auspices.

In his discussion of the Afghanistan conflict, Thomas Johnson indicates certain core concepts endorsed by Taliban like Jihad and Islamism. For instance, they believe that Afghan Muslims must wage war against any non-Muslim in the name of Jihad, and all Muslims have a mission of safeguarding the regime under the name of Islamism (Johnson 24). Accordingly, Taliban leaders could authorize various extremist practices, compel citizens to conform to specific mandatory codes, and utilize their power to coerce Afghans into joining them.

The regime often sanctioned violations of Afghan freedoms and rights and rarely questioned their self-righteousness in the name of Islam. Since their aim was enforcing an utter extremist regime through violence mostly, people often grew dissatisfied with their current situation, especially that "Brutality in the name of religion perhaps makes the crimes appear less gruesome to those committing them. However, for those on the receiving end and

those witnessing the unholy drama, it created disgust about the professed belief system of the

perpetrator and the enabler" (Abbas 73). The Taliban started stating its own rules for the new

lifestyle in Afghanistan, and it usually dismissed objections and penalized neglectful citizens.

The new laws were both broadcasted and leafletted throughout the country for all people to

hear and read. The core announced principals and rules were as follows:

> All citizens must pray five times a day. If it is prayer time and you are caught doing
>
> something other, you will be beaten.
>
> All men will grow their beards. The correct length is at least one clenched fist beneath
>
> the chin. If you do not abide by this, you will be beaten.
>
> Ml boys will wear turbans. Boys in grade one through six will wear black turbans,
>
> higher grades will wear white. All boys will wear Islamic clothes.
>
> Shirt collars will be buttoned.
>
> Singing is forbidden.
>
> Dancing is forbidden.
>
> Playing cards, playing chess, gambling, and kite flying are forbidden.
>
> Writing books, watching films, and painting pictures are forbidden.
>
> If you keep parakeets, you will be beaten. Your birds will be killed.
>
> If you steal, your hand will be cut off at the wrist. If you steal again, your foot will be
>
> cut off.
>
> If you are not Muslim, do not worship where you can be seen by Muslims. If you do,
>
> you will be beaten and imprisoned. If you are caught trying to convert a Muslim to
>
> your faith, you will be executed. (Husseini 296-97)
>
> Besides, clear rules for women were as follows:
>
> Attention women:

You will stay inside your homes at all times. It is not proper for women to wander

aimlessly about the streets.

If you go outside, you must be accompanied by a mahram, a male relative.

 If you are caught alone on the street, you will be beaten and sent home.

You will not, under any circumstance, show your face. You will cover with burqa

when outside. If you do not, you will be severely beaten.

Cosmetics are forbidden.

Jewelry is forbidden.

You will not wear charming clothes.

You will not speak unless spoken to.

You will not make eye contact with men.

You will not laugh in public. If you do, you will be beaten.

You will not paint your nails. If you do, you will lose a finger.

Girls are forbidden from attending school all schools for girls will be closed

immediately.

Women are forbidden from working.

If you are found guilty of adultery, you will be stoned to death.

Listen. Listen well. Obey. Allah-u-Akbar. (297-98)

Despite the relatively explicit decreed directions by Taliban leaders, it seems

contradictory to their actions. They prohibited acts like bribery and intimidated citizens with

various punishments, yet there are shreds of evidence of the leaders' scandals of bribery and

corruption. For instance, in his book *War in the Modern World 1990-2014*, De Jeremy Black

suggests: "In 1996, bribes played a role in dissolving much of the opposition to the Taliban"

(Black 57). Tools similar to bribery and corruption were often used by Taliban to ensure their

compact ascendance to a position of dominance and control over the country.

It appears that such tactics proved useful in most cases, albeit some adamant opposition from non-Pashtun Afghan. For example, Taliban often favored bribery instead of violence during its fight to occupy Herat city in 1995 (Rashid 40). Taliban's illegal activities contradicted their proud statements of fair and just laws where they promised severe punishments for corrupt government members. Nevertheless, the leaders continuously stated that "there was no corruption at all, if anyone was found taking bribe, then when caught the Taliban would blacken their faces and take him around in public" (Linschoten and Kuehn 102-103). In summary, Taliban, as a self-proclaimed movement, allowed itself to flee from its severe punishments, yet it still inflicted them on sinners; hence it displayed its inconsistent and defective system and principals. It surprised the citizens, according to Hassan Abbas, "the war-weary public embraced the Taliban in the hope of a fresh start, but they never signed up to a dogmatic version of Islam" (Abbas 63). Accordingly, some Afghan citizens tended to question the movement's credibility and to regard it as ruinous because they were already familiar with war and its aftermath. Nevertheless, as citizens of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, they were supposed to abide by the rules, avoid objections to the government's decisions, and be practicing Muslims.

### 1.3.2. Afghan Women Under Taliban

The situation of women in the different dogmatic extremist societies is nearly identical since they tend to struggle against discrimination, oppression, and violence for survival. Afghan women, in particular, were deprived of their basic human rights under the regime of Taliban. Al Jazeera Media Network helped to spread those women's dreadful situations through a documentary. *Afghanistan: No Country for Women* is the title of a documentary that includes testimonies and narratives of Afghan women and demonstrates their apparent frustration about their future in such a place ("101 East - Afghanistan"). Taliban tended to

identify women as an unnecessary element of society and undermined their potential contributions to the improvement of their community. That is to say; the Afghan woman had likely been denied her social, religious, political, and economic rights as well as roles under the rule of Taliban.

### 1.3.2.1. Political Role

The leaders of the new extremist state often preached about the value of women and assured their rights in their official statements, yet statistics and evidence indicate some contradictions between spoken and lived reality. For instance, their claim of founding an Islamic state identical to that of the Prophet Mohammed, peace be upon him, resulted in establishing one of the most dogmatic and extremist versions of Islamic communities. Hence, women had yet to fight for their survival and basic rights before they attempted to indulge in functional roles.

Taliban's version of religion was usually a combination of distorted and personalized religious interpretations. The militants tended to dismiss the fact that Muslim women participated in various fields during the time of the Prophet, and eliminated the female presence. As an illustration, in her book "*The Veil and the Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Rights in Islam",* Fatima Mernissi comments on women's reality and perception in both Muslim and non-Muslim worlds as follows: "[...] we can have either Islam or democracy, but never both together." (Mernissi vii). The author refers to certain prominent figures who often discussed the issue of Muslim women and politics in their writings. They usually argued against the agency of women apart from housekeeping. For example, Said Al-Afghani documents the biography of the Prophet's wife Aisha in *Aicha and Politics* in which he mentions her failure in politics and battles such as "The Battle of the Camel." The historian considers her defeat as proof of women's incapability of leadership

positions and that Allah intended to set her as an example to justify the exclusion of women from politics (6). Nevertheless, it sounds fallacious that Aisha is discredited mainly because she was defeated and to deny women their political roles due to such a dissonance. For instance, one of the influential Muslim scholars Al-Tabari denied the possible validity of such radical arguments because they lack a concrete justification in Islam, especially that during the Prophet's time, women enjoyed a myriad of rights and roles freely (61). All in all, women's lives according to the Quran and the Prophet are dissimilar from their lives according to the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. To illustrate, Fatima Mernissi states the following:

> Ample historical evidence portrays women in the Prophet's Medina [...] as equal participants, in the making of their Arab history. Women fled aristocratic tribal Mecca by the thousands to enter Medina, the Prophet's city in the seventh century, because Islam promised equality and dignity for all, for men and women, masters and servants. Every woman who came to Medina when the Prophet was the political leader of Muslims could gain access to full citizenship, the status of sahabi, Companion of the Prophet. Muslims can take pride that in their language they have the feminine of that word, sahabiyat, women who enjoyed the right to enter into the councils of the Muslim to speak freely to its umma [...] and to be involved in the management of military and political affairs. (viii)

 Although Allah and his Prophet provided the guideline and the example to be followed to deal with women, Taliban often denied women their rights and insisted on their oppression and exclusion from society, "forcing women into seclusion became their favorite pastime"(69), says Hassan Abbas. According *to the Central Asia Institute*, Afghan women first obtained their right of suffrage in 1919 after the country's independence, then in 1964, after issuing a new constitution. However, by Taliban's regime, Afghan women could neither

occupy governmental posts nor vote nor run in elections ("The Fight for Women's Voting Rights"). Albeit their obvious stance concerning the female involvement, Taliban could still benefit from certain services that only women could do. One of the reasons can be the militants' relative sexual and physical exploitation of women because they consider it as their right. Also, women are usually believed to be passive, ignorant, and innocent. Thus their company could provide an easily unsuspected appearance at the disposal of extremists (Ahmadi and Lakhani 2). Women were kept remote from the political scene, which usually opposed their right to enjoy their rights and guaranteed their ignorance of civil rights.

### 1.3.2.2. Religious Role

Religiously speaking, extremist Taliban groups allocated Mullahs as the exclusive religious delegates who should convey their respective Islamic guideline. After a group of Afghan women was interviewed about their status under Taliban rule, their answers indicated that the Islamic state agenda did not ascribe any distinctive roles to women. Their religious education and comprehension generally consist of a restricted knowledge of the five prayers and the accompanied Quran verses in Arabic, which is an unlearned foreign language in Afghanistan (10). Some women appeared uninformed of the accurate meaning of Jihad itself, and their brief definition consisted of the act being a religious obligation. However, they were ignorant of the motives as one woman stated: "I am hearing [that] jihad is a religious duty. But then I hear about the killing of innocent people I get so confused." (10-11) All in all, the dogmatic system of Taliban reduced the chances of active female presence, except for rare occasions when some doctor women were allowed to work in the only female hospital in the country.

The religious rhetoric by Mullahs usually propagated the dictated dissonant beliefs of militants and was void of gender equality that was replaced with discrimination; reciprocal

respect that turned into oppressive patriarchy; and Islamic ethical guideline that was misapprehended and misused. The self-proclaimed Islamic state ordained a police department that would ensure a relevant law application, especially women-related laws. Particularly, the police forces forbade women from leaving their residence, and ordained men to blacken the house so that their wives and daughters would no longer be visible from the outside(Rashid 70), yet, nowhere is it mentioned that Islam allowed such forced imprisonment. The dire situation of women under Taliban received the attention of international media, where feminists and human rights activists felt urged to give voice to the voiceless women.

### 1.3.2.3. Domestic Role

Domestic affairs have usually been the responsibility and duty of women regardless of the place or time; hence, women are often granted agency on the house and family matters. Similarly, Afghan women were supposed to perform the daily household chores like cleaning, cooking, looking after children, and taking care of their husbands' needs. They had to ensure a religious education to their children and to prepare them to join Jihad as fighters, even if it is against their will as mothers. They could not withhold their husbands from extremism and violence because their opinions are insignificant; nonetheless, certain women could impose their opinions by appealing to emotions.

To exemplify, testimonies of another group of interviewees reflect their relative sentimental agency like threatening one's child of repudiation, or one's husband of divorce as follows: "I told my husband to divorce me so that I could carry on with my life if he wished to continue the Jihad. I told him I didn't want to become a widow and become property of another man" (Ahmadi and Lakhani 10). Still, the vast majority of women are often underestimated, taken for granted, and restrained from interfering with males' decisions on Jihad. Taliban promoted this traditional idea of gender roles by appealing to honour and pride,

which constitutes the sensitive point in that particular society. Consequently, Afghan women are identified as the symbol of purity and pride, and they are often subject to deceptive attempts of patriarchal authority and oppression that require their obedient, voiceless, and passive presence.

### 1.3.2.4. Economic Role

It is widely held that financial independence is often the key to autonomy, self-reliance, and authority. For instance, since traditions in Afghanistan usually hold men responsible for the economic affairs of their society and household as an indication for their power, women are excluded from such roles. The act of forbidding girls from schools and work at the beginning of Taliban's regime served as an allusion to their imposed passivity on women (Rashid 2). In other words, the ability of women to provide basic life necessities for their families can lead to their independent existence, which is a threat to the patriarchal grip and the ascribed gender roles.

Afghan women were practically disengaged from employment platforms outside their houses. Nevertheless, some women challenged themselves to overcome the financial straits they often encountered by establishing their home-based businesses. The former decision was usually taken in secrecy after some women became widowed and resolved to fill the vacant family-head post (Bernard et al. 87). Notwithstanding the relatively limited job options, women like Kamila Sadiqqi and Hasina Safi launched their projects and stood firm against hardships. In particular, the former created her dressmaking home workshops that flourished and spread to include the female workforce, thus granting an opportunity to helpless women. The latter, on the other hand, served as a director of the Afghan Women's Network that aimed at clustering the plethora of Afghan women's rights associations together through education. Despite the functional and often confidential projects, the Taliban would still expose and

threaten such audacious women (De Leede 9). All in all, the outlook of Afghan women's economic participation might be the lowest during Taliban's rule, albeit some exceptions.

**1.4.Language**

It is almost certain that language is a vital means of communicating one's needs, feelings, and thoughts. Accordingly, in his book *Language in Literature,* the linguist Roman Jakobson classified language aspects into six main functions that substantially describe the communicated subject, hence enabling the reader/ the receiver to dissect the meaning delicately (Jakobson 66). One of the main ambiguous linguistic areas to explore might be the literary language, where the distinct functions superimpose and contribute to the eloquence and aestheticism of texts. For instance, there are several methods to the study of language in literary use like stylistics, which investigates the effects of employing specific linguistic patterns and devices on the total text meaning.

**1.4.1.  Feminist Stylistics**

To grasp the concept of Feminist Stylistics, first of all, one ought to present an elaborate illuminating definition of Stylistics. In their book *Style in Fiction*, Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short assume that stylistics study is relatively related to seeking explanations. For instance, the stylistics in question concerns itself with establishing a connection between language style in use and the aesthetic function of literary texts, hence combining the linguist and critic's perspectives for a significant stylistic analysis (Leech and Short 11). Besides, the theorist Peter Verdonk provided an introduction to Stylistics, which states that this field of language study seeks to analyze the style of language in use through certain selected linguistic patterns like phonology, graphology, lexis, and syntax.

The study also includes investigating the specific motives of such textual evidence and choice as well as describing the substantial resulting effects on the content (Verdonk 4-58). In addition to the compendious definition of Stylistics, Verdonk indicates the existence of several possibilities to read texts such as ideological perspectives like feminism, which gives rise to Feminist Stylistics.

Ideological readings aim at scrutinizing texts to reveal possible latent evidence of ideological interpretation regardless of the author's indefinite intention, although Leech and Short declared that "every writer necessarily makes choices of expression"(16). Hence, certain theorists have suggested several definitions of Feminist Stylistics. To begin with, Peter Verdonk defines the concept as "a branch of stylistics which aims to provide readers with analytical and critical tools to identify and resist gender bias in texts" (118). He argues that this analysis enables stylisticians to use the "dominant ideologies" of women's social roles to interpret women's genderlect in texts as agentive or passive, deprecatory or commending, and so forth (70). Thus, such ideological readings of text language often serve as techniques for effective interpretations.

Next, the feminist linguist Sara Mills devoted an entire book to feminist stylistics, where she condemns the circumscribed set of stylistic standards that disregard essential aspects like race and gender. According to her, the purpose of feminist stylistics is to analyze "socioeconomic factors which have allowed that language to appear, or which have determined its appearance, or which have determined the type of interpretations of that text which are possible" (Mills 13). She believes that gender steers one's use of language according to the common social beliefs amongst individuals; hence she suggests exploring the manner figurative devices and language manifest the issue of gender.

Women's literary contributions have constantly been overlooked because they fall under the female style of writing, which is derogated and considered as inferior to men's

contributions as Mills writes: "This practice of describing things associated with women as if they were deviant from a male norm can be termed phallocentric" (33). Men's deprecatory opinion of the opposite sex often emanates from the stereotypical and socially constructed image of women that presents them as passive, obedient, naive, and predictable. For Mills, literary men, who usually control the norms and standards of writing, are taking women's literature for granted, especially that they have not acknowledged the existence of another distinct entity of literary norms besides their own. Instead, these norms are neglected as nonstandard and transgressing.

Thence, this section has as a subject matter the definition and presentation of the key linguistic areas that will be analyzed in the following chapters. The linguistic patterns in question will focus on the lexical features that can be indicators of female agency and passivity in the novels, such as distinct stative/dynamic verbs and transitive/intransitive verbs in addition to syntactical features like modals.

**1.4.1.1.Agency in Language**

In the large sense, humans' actions have been the subject of study in various research fields, namely sociology, psychology, and linguistics, and Aristotle is apparently one of the prominent figures who explored the concept. According to him, humans actually choose to undertake an action, and its results will affect both the addressee and the performer. Hence, any driving force behind their actions practically determines their agency (Crespo 869). Specifically speaking, humans' agency has often been linguistically investigated through literary accounts as a method to explore the style of the texts and their unique stylistic features. For instance, the term agency is used by Ahearn to refer to "the socioculturally mediated capacity to act," and this is true in the sense that the dominant socio-cultural, ideological and economic atmosphere usually determines the agent and his/her potentially

allocated control and power (Ahearn 112). Besides, the anthropologist Alessandro Duranti argues that actions performed by agents will likely have an impact on both ends bodies, i.e. the agent and the receiver of the action, hence elaborating a "causative chain" (Duranti 454). In other words, the agency process will probably involve manifested power by agents over their action choices, which will subsequently affect the entities involved in the process.

### 1.4.1.1.1. Agency in Literature

Linguistically speaking, the employed syntactic and lexical patterns in literary texts often provide the textual evidence to examine agency and its features despite the possible equivocal, latent, and ambiguous language in use. For Yamamoto, the focus on linguistic indexes like verbs, tenses, or figurative language should not relatively distract stylisticians from inspecting the implied inherent factors as they are mutually constitutive (Yamamoto 44). In a nutshell, the formerly referenced linguist Sara Mills simply defines agency as a concept that determines who is the action doer and the action recipient that constitutes a succinct, thorough definition of the technical term in question (Mills 162). Leech and Short, however, provide examples of analysis methods to dissect agency in literary texts. They include this linguistic entity under the title "How Linguistic Choices Affect Mind Style," mainly to indicate its effect as a linguistic choice at the semantic level (152).

### 1.4.1.1.2. Dynamicity in Literature

Literature is a term that usually encompasses multiple different genres like fiction, which includes artistically written accounts that are often based on real or imaginative events that are aesthetically moulded ("The Editors"). For instance, aspects like plot, setting, and characterization constitute the literary body, which can be textually analyzed to explore agency. To illustrate, dynamic characters usually display commanding actions as agentive

elements can control, direct, or change the course of events through dynamic verbs while evolving simultaneously. According to Quirk et al. in *A Grammar of Contemporary English,* dynamicity verbs fall under the following categories: activity verbs like listen, play, read; process verbs like change, grow, mature; verbs of bodily sensation like hurt, ache; transitional event verbs like lose, fall, arrive; and momentary verbs like tap, kick, jump (Quirk et al. 82). Such verbs position the action performer and allocate controlling meaning to the communicated linguistic entity. Besides, they result in an impact on the receiver that insinuates he is not practically in control; he is inclined to succumb, and his agency is suppressed.

In addition to dynamic verbs, several auxiliary verbs that indicate modality can appear as agent textual evidence if they manifest permission like can, necessity like must, have to; possibility like might, could; and volition like will, shall (Kies 307). Last but not least, transitive verbs like bring, send, and carry are verbs that transmit an action to the object, and since they result in an external effect, they are often considered dynamic verbs too, hence agency indicators.

### 1.4.1.1.3.   Passivity in Literature

One of the tools used to indicate the absence or the suppression of agency is passivity, which can be employed in a literary composition with the help of various literary devices. According to professor Kies, these are some devices: intransitive verbs, stative verbs, passive voice, perfect aspect, subjunctive mood, negation, and several other elements (Kies). Thus, passive elements, unlike the agentive ones, are often entities deprived of linguistic activity and control by authors intentionally or not. One of the aims behind the use of passive characters and reactions might be based on normative ideological ideas like undermining the roles of female literary characters. The latter can be an allusion to their traditionally

undermined social presence and role, yet passivity can sometimes be an indicator of implicit agency based on contexts.

To better understand female passivity in literature, Bradwick describes six types of passivity in her study of women's psychology as follows: " passive and agreeing, passive because of willingness to be dominated by a beloved individual, passive for the purpose of manipulating, Passive as a Manifestation of Frustration, passive-aggressive, passive as reservation and prudery"(qtd in. Hamdan and Radzi 224). They can be classified into three general categories: passivity as a choice, passivity as a tool, and passivity as an imposition and the latter is the subject matter of this study.

Grammatically speaking, passivity can manifest itself through stative and intransitive verbs, passive voice, perfect aspect, subjunctive mood, negation, and specific modals. To begin with, stative verbs are verbs concerned with states like feelings, thoughts, and senses instead of action-based results. They are not usually used in progressive tenses. Quirk et al. identify two main categories of stative verbs as follows: verbs of perception of cognition like believe, imagine, and presuppose; and relational verbs like deserve, contain, and matter (Quirk et al. 85). Second, intransitive verbs like laugh, smile, and occur, contrary to transitive verbs, do not necessitate an object since the subject is enough to cover the action by itself. In literature, actions transmitted through intransitive verbs usually serve to inhibit characters from controlling the chain of events (Kies). Third, certain modality auxiliaries are tools to undermine the agentive action according to Kies' list: would, could, ought to, needs to, might, and tried to (Kies). Besides these major passivity indicators come minor features like tenses, negative and conditional forms, and voices, which can exist in unison with the previous indicators (Kies). Figures of speech can also have an inquisitive role in undercutting agency; accordingly, Leech and Short suggest inspecting the interpretations of metaphors, synecdoche, and metonymy in different contexts (63-64). All in all, stylistics and feminist stylistics in

specific are text-based approaches where textual evidence like lexical, syntactic, and semantic patterns are inspected and analyzed in respect to their contextual functions. Hence, ideological readings of texts might be unchallenging compared to other potential readings.

### 1.4.2. Language and Religion

Roman Jakobson notes that language has six functions, which are explored in the communicated messages by interlocutors, as follows: emotive, referential, poetic, conative, metalingual, and phatic (Jakobson 71). Specifically, religion is one of the fields that have employed language and its functions as a means of communicating its messages through different mediums like religious leaders and preachers. Imams on Fridays and pastors on Sundays deliver sermons whose subjects depend on various factors like political and social issues. Their job consists of multiple roles like persuading people to adhere to religious commandments, informing them about their religious rights and duties, as well as serving as religious consultants at the service of the community. In doing so, these religious preachers often utilize rhetorical techniques to ensure effective message delivery.

One of the definitions provided by Merriam-Webster for rhetoric is "the study of writing or speaking as a means of communication or persuasion," which renders it almost necessary for preachers to utilize language as effectively as they can. However, the act of preparing a powerful, potent message is not complete without a firm, determined performer. Thus, Aristotle lists three pivotal epithets for a qualified persuading character, which are: "practical intelligence, a virtuous character, and good will" (qtd. in Rapp). According to him, the three traits are often mutually strengthening, and it is better if they are all present simultaneously to ensure a credible, trustworthy status among people.

Usually, religious men target people's emotions rather than logical faculties, or what Aristotle called pathos. The reasons enfold that addressees are often elderly, emotional appeal

is usually effective, and speeches could include multiple rhetorical devices to entice the audience's curiosity, such as simile, metaphor, rhyme, anaphora, and alliteration (Vines). Therefore, if preachers are equipped with the necessary traits and their sermons showcase commandment rhetoric, they will gain the audience's acknowledgment and trust as well as deliver Gods' messages effectively. If anything, this shows the role of language as an intermediary between two separate entities: God and people; as Rahimi suggests: "It is desirable to say that in this process language works as an instrument to produce behaviour policy, provoke psychological interest and evocate power" (8). Language, then, is often a reliable means to ensure an exact understanding of religious discourse where morals, duties, rights, forbidden and allowed practices, along with religious history, will be correctly processed and respected. Nonetheless, language can also be misused for personal purposes by men in power because they recognize religious people's position towards religion, so they manipulate them accordingly. Rahimi proceeds in listing several ways that language could be used to accomplish power and credibility, like alluding to the different religious stories, which are psychologically powerful like parables,  using a discourse of encouraging people to be religiously committed and warning them of the opposite, in addition to employing religious lexis to support a cause or a person (11). Hate speech is one of the usual features of religious language, especially in multiethnic communities because certain people choose to be fanatic instead of tolerant. India is a significant example of a multiethnic country where hate speech can occur more often; one example could be the following statement of the Indian religious leader Akbaruddin Owaisi: "the 25 crore Muslims will take care of the 100 crore Hindus if only the police was removed for 15 minutes" (qtd. in Mishra 105). Such speech could trigger considerable plights amongst both religious sects who would justify their irrational practices using religion. Consequently, it is one example of how language is employed to serve different purposes under the name of religion.

### 1.4.3.  Language and Power

Language is a system of communication at the service of people's needs and thoughts, which makes it a social phenomenon. Its use may take various forms, such as register, jargon, slang, or dialect, as well as different uses like communicative, poetic, directive, or argumentative depending on topics. For instance, the directive use of language might indicate manifest power like the verbal enforcement of law and order by the police, or latent power like obeying the authoritative head of the family where both powers can impose their rules without adopting coercive means (Sourgo). According to Merriam-Webster, power means "possession of control, authority, or influence over others," and language is one of the tools to secure such control.

Media is one of the platforms that utilize language to guarantee power through different methods like supporting certain campaigns, promoting specific ideologies, as well as showcasing or neglecting social issues in accordance with their policies. According to Mayr in *Language and Power,* their policy's changes substantially depend on the organism behind the scenes because it contributes to the financing and promoting matters of these media institutions, hence "[...] the media tend to function ideologically, not so much due to bias, but simply through the nature of established routine practices" (Mayr 2). Thus, the news would include language that suggests latent power through grammar, diction, and news type, so a journalist or a reporter can influence the addressees unconsciously through these choices. That is to say, manifesting or suppressing agency can result in different meanings; an example would be the newspaper headlines about the invasion of Iraq, where each newspaper reported the war differently on the same day, March 20th, 2003. While Rocky Mountain News chose to declare the agent "U.S. launches attack on Iraq," The Boston Globe suppressed it and simply stated the news "Iraq war begins." In addition to grammar, diction can affect people's perception of the news; for instance, the meaning will relatively change if a journalist uses

riots instead of protests and vice versa. The former presents the demonstrators as aggressive and guilty, whereas the latter presents them as peaceful protestors for their case.

Politically speaking, colonization is one of the processes that employed language to gain power mainly through missionary activities. In an attempt to spread the colonizer's religion, culture, and language, the colonizer designates missionaries to accomplish their religious duty. They usually spread their religious and cultural baggage through teaching, preaching, and participating as community activists because they often aim at gaining sustainable impacts on people as it facilitates the colonialism process and ensures the fulfilment of their religious duty ("What Do Missionaries Do?"). To exemplify, Safran states an example of Christian missionaries in southeast Africa who learned and used Thonga language in their teaching and preaching to secure the maximum influence (177). Hence, language was repeatedly adopted to impose power as one of the initial steps towards complete colonial control.

Usually, the language of the dominant power, like colonizer's language, is the established one whether in educational, political, or religious institutions. Korean, for instance, was precluded in Korean educational institutions by order of the occupying Japanese empire, and Korean use was only allowed for American missionaries, which resulted in a significant success of their advocacy for Christianization in different parts of Asia (Schiffman 65). Consequently, certain colonies abstain from establishing their national languages and regimes and preserve the colonizer's language after independence, especially if the majority mastered it. Such a decision might relatively keep them subservient and attached to the former colonizer's policies. In a visit to an Algerian university in 1973, the Nigerian lecturer Dr. Jinadu concluded that French has been established as the language of "intelligentsia" after his discussion with some university students and that it "had come to stay" (Jinadu 611).

Colonialism and missionary activities might be an extreme example of the use of language formerly as a coercive means to impose a physical dominion, yet there are other daily life cases. In an article about power in language and discourse, Damico et al. discuss the concept of interactional power, which enfolds a study of the distinct components of interaction like the topic, setting, people, as well as a study of their interrelations (64), and the forms of address it encompasses. Forms of address differ according to languages and serve to showcase the position of interlocutors based on their interactive language as follows:

> In English, for example, one may use given names (*Tommy*), family names with or without title (*Ball*, *Dr Ball)*, role-based names (*son*), or honorifics (*Your Honor*) as markers of the power differential.[...] In French, for example, choice of the alternative pronouns (*vous*, *tu*) assists speakers in locating themselves along a power continuum. [...] So, for example, we may note power coded when there is an unequal distribution of address forms. For example, *"Tommy, how are you doing today?"* "*I'm feeling great, Dr Ball.*" (68-9)

All in all, ideologies could be shaped through language to influence, entice, and alter different realities like distributing propaganda, propagating religions, in addition to challenging and changing countries' compositions during and after independence.

**Chapter 02: Female's Agency and Passivity in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter***

**2.1. Introduction**

This chapter is an attempt to stylistically analyze the discourse of the female protagonist in *The Scarlet Letter*, Hester Prynne. The analysis consists of exploring her passages and extracting these linguistic categories: dynamic/ stative verbs, transitive/ intransitive verbs to arrive at statistical evidence of the character's agency and passivity. The aim of this analysis is to investigate the status of puritan females in their respective theocratic government by inspecting the linguistic choices opted by the author. Hence, as explained in the previous chapter, Agency can be manifested through various patterns, yet our areas of interest are dynamicity, transitivity, and agentive modals. Similarly, it can also be suppressed through passivity, intransitivity, and passive modals, especially that these two classifications tend to be mutually exclusive.

**2.2. Analysis of the Uses of Agency Devices**

Nathaniel Hawthorne has utilized multiple devices interchangeably to describe the agency of his protagonist Hester Prynne. For instance, to showcase the character's agency, he often employed dynamic verbs in the active voice, modals of certainty and obligation, and transitive verb. Accordingly, the following samples will demonstrate the stylistic features that highlight and undercut agency accordingly.

### 2.2.1. Transitive Dynamic Verbs

The first selection of samples will include the agentive use of transitive dynamic verbs i.e., where Hester Prynne either plainly manifests herself and her control of her decisions, or when other characters picture her as an agentive dynamic character:

1) "This woman *has brought* shame upon us all" (My emphasis, Hawthorne 53).

2) "Here *comes* Mistress Prynne herself" (ME, 53).

3) "She *hath raised* a great scandal" (ME, 62).

These three sentences describe Hester Prynne from the point of view of other characters. They plainly hold her responsible for staining their puritan conservative God-fearing community through the use of dynamic verbs like bring, come, and raise. Meanwhile, Hester is standing silent and powerless on the scaffold against their condemnatory stares. Also, the syntactic structure of these sentences include two transitive verbs (bring and raise), which further consolidate her public image as agentive in spite of her silence and secrecy.

However, the following samples are manifestations of the character's evident agency through active, transitive, and dynamic verbs:

1) "She *repelled* him" (ME, 54).

2) "Hester *repelled* the offered medicine" (ME, 72).

3) "She *bore* in her arms a child" (ME, 54).

4) "She *bore* on her breast [...] a specimen" (ME, 81).

5) "She *took* the baby on her arm" (ME, 54).

6) "She *took* the oath" (ME, 77).

7) "Hester *took* little Pearl" (ME, 178).

8) "She *ascended* a flight" (ME, 57).

9) "She silently *ascended* the steps" (ME, 149).

10) "She *cast* away the fragment" (ME, 160).

11) "Her mind [...] *kept* bringing up other scenes" (ME, 59).

12) "Hester Prynne, meanwhile, *kept* her place" (ME, 70).

13) "She *clutched* the child" (ME, 60).

14) "Did Hester Prynne *clutch* the fatal token" (ME, 95).

15) "[...] she *turned* her eyes" (ME, 60).

16) "Hester Prynne now *turned* her face" (ME, 65).

17) "[...] nor ever once *turned* away her firm, sad eyes" (ME, 190).

18) "She *pressed* her infant to her bosom" (ME, 61).

19) "She [...] *pressed* his head" (ME, 190).

20) "[...] as she *lifted* her eyes" (ME, 65).

21) "Hester *shook* her head" (ME, 69).

22) "I *bid* thee think again" (ME, 73).

23) "Hester *bade* little Pearl run down" (ME, 164).

24) "Hester Prynne *drained* the cup, and [...] *seated* herself" (ME, 74).

25) "Hester Prynne *clasped* her hand" (ME, 76).

26) "She *hid* the secret" (ME, 79).

27) "Hester *established* herself" (ME, 80).

28) "She, however, *incurred* no risk of want" (ME, 81).

29) "Hester really *filled* a gap" (ME, 82).

30) "Hester *bestowed* all her superfluous means in charity" (ME, 83).

31) "She *employed* in making coarse garments" (ME, 83).

32) "She *offered up* a real sacrifice" (ME, 83).

33) "The sole portion that she *retained*" (ME, 84).

34) "The poor [...] whom she *sought out*" (ME, 84).

35) "She early *sought* to impose a tender but strict control" (ME, 90).

36) "Whose doors she *entered"* (ME, 84).

37) "As she *met* the sanctified frown" (ME, 86).

38) "She *met* his eyes" (ME, 110).

39) "Once in my life I *met* the Black Man!" (ME, 181).

40) "Hester Prynne often *dropped* her work" (ME, 94).

41) "She *resisted* the impulse" (ME, 96).

42) "Hester Prynne *gave* a summons" (ME, 102).

43) "Hester *caught* hold of Pearl" (ME, 110).

44) "She *caught* the low undertone" (ME, 239).

45) "Hester [...] *drew* her" (ME, 110).

46) "Hester [...] *called* to Pearl" (ME, 199).

47) "She *made* no claim" (ME, 156).

48) "Hester Prynne *made* a step" (ME, 183).

49) "I [...] *make* it as if it had never been!" (ME, 197).

50) "I *was betraying* it" (ME, 166).

51) "She *decided* [...] that he had a right" (ME, 156).

52) "She *summoned* back her child" (ME, 172).

53) "She [...] *brought out* the words" (ME, 188).

54) "She *left* the minister" (ME, 188).

55) "She now *read* his heart" (ME, 188).

56) "She *threw* her arms around him" (ME, 190).

57) "She [...] *threw* it to a distance" (ME, 198).

58) "With this symbol I *undo* it all" (ME, 197).

59) "She *undid* the clasp" (ME, 198).

60) "She *took off* the formal cap" (ME, 198).

61) "She […] *fastened* it" (ME, 207).

62) "She thus *received* back this deadly symbol" (ME, 207).

63) "Hester next *gathered* up the heavy tresses [...] *confined* them" (ME, 207).

64) "She *extended* her hand" (ME, 207).

65) "She now [...] *encountered* it" (ME, 222).

66) "She [...] *took up* the scarlet letter" (ME, 207).

67) "She *took up* her position close" (ME, 238).

68) "Whence she *dated* the first hour of her life" (ME, 240).

69) "Hester Prynne [...] paused before she *reached* him" (ME, 248).

70) "Hester partly *raised* him, and *supported* his head" (ME, 251).

71) "When Hester Prynne first *wore* her ignominious badge" (ME, 253).

72) "She *unlocked* it" (ME, 257).

73) "Hester [...] *counselled* them" (ME, 259).

74) "'I *have* greatly *wronged* thee,' *murmured* Hester" (ME, 74).

75) "I have *taken* his measure" (ME, 149).

76) "I *have* surely *acted* a false part" (ME, 167).

77) "As she *watched* the growth" (ME, 88).

78) "I *have been watching* at a death-bed" (ME, 149).

79) "She [...] *looked* around *at* her townspeople and neighbours" (ME, 54).

80) "She *looked* also *at* her slumbering child" (ME, 73).

81) "She *looked* fearfully *into* the child's expanding nature" (ME, 88).

82) "While Hester *was looking at* her own image in them" (ME, 95).

83) "Hester Prynne *looked at* the man of skill" (ME, 110).

84) "Hester *looked* steadily *into* her little face" (ME, 174).

85) "Hester Prynne *looked into* his face" (ME, 87).

86) "Hester *looked at* him" (ME, 199).

As mentioned previously, these are transitive dynamic verbs conjugated in different tenses in the active voice. The past tense is the most used, besides the present perfect in the samples 74, 75, and 76; past continuous in 50, 82, and 83, and present perfect continuous in 78. In particular, progressive tenses are often features of dynamic verbs only. Hawthorne could showcase Hester as an agentive character that controls her actions and decisions, especially when her daughter Pearl is the subject matter. Her maternal instinct emphasized her active protective role in her daughter's life, which explains the successive use of Pearl as an object. In addition, to further propound the idea of Hester's powerful command and lead, the author resorted to transitive verbs, especially that transitivity choices suggest the presence of a human agent (Kies).

The total number of active, transitive, and dynamic verbs is 63 different verbs that were used 90 times. In addition to the numerous use of 9 reporting verbs in simple past tense up to 106 times as follows: to say (39 times), to answer (25), to ask (11), to whisper (6), to reply (8), to repeat (5), to inquire (4), to observe (one time),To cry (7). Consequently, the overall number of active, transitive, and dynamic verbs by Hester is 72 distinct verbs nearly 196 times, in addition to the use of 2 transitive verbs by other characters, which results in 74 verbs used up to 198 times. Their use produced an evident sense of the protagonist's agency despite her surrounding patriarchal ruthless environment. The latter continued to constantly demean her after her punishment, albeit her repentance. Nevertheless, instead of escaping the public's daily degrading words and stares, she endorsed silence as her response and charity as her contribution to the community.

**2.2.2. Modality**

Next, the analysis shall include the passages of verbs in the active voice with modals of certainty and obligation that emphasize the sense of dominance.

1)  "I *will keep* thy secret" (ME, 77).

2)  "I *will call* her" (ME, 199).

3)  "Nevertheless, I *will enter*" (ME, 102).

4)  "I *will call* her" (ME, 199).

5)  "I *will die* first!" (ME, 111).

6)  "She *will be* beyond your reach" (ME, 222).

7)  "Do not tease me; else *I shall put* thee into the dark closet!" (ME, 177).

8)  "I *shall stoop* to implore thy mercy" (ME, 169).

9)  "What *shall I say*?" (ME, 176).

10) "Hasten, Pearl, or I *shall be* angry with thee!" (ME, 205).

These short passages indicate the use of the modal auxiliary "will" to emphasize the agentive and intentional functions of dynamic as well as stative verbs. For instance, the author utilized this modal 6 times to suggest Hester's strong volition to act upon her words like keeping a secret, to renounce actions that appear against her will, and to speculate her future states like dying and disappearing. On the other hand, the use of modal "shall" 4 times denotes a weaker volition than that of "will," but it still manifests future activities in 8, hypothetical threats in 7 and 10, and even interrogation in 9.

1) "She *must* either [...] *carry* it [...], or [must] *sink* beneath it" (ME, 78).

2) "The infamy that she *must carry*" (ME, 78).

3) "I *must tarry* at home, and [must] *keep watch* over my little Pearl" (ME, 115).

4) "I *must reveal* the secret" (ME, 169).

5) "Where Hester Prynne *must take up* again the burden" (ME, 191).

6) "Leap across the brook [...] and run hither! Else I *must come* to thee!" (ME, 205).

7) "This woman *should* still *call* that place her home, where, and where only, she *must* [...] *be* the type of shame" (ME, 79).

8) "Or, *must* she *receive* those intimations [...] as truth?" (ME, 86).

The use of "must" and "should" denotes a sense of obligation and necessity based on the interpretation of its context. Here, Hawthorne employs these modals 9 times, yet if we consider a possible use of ellipsis to avoid repetition of the modal "must" in the same sentence, the number will be 11 times. Different contexts resulted into disparate functions, for instance, these passages: 1, 2, 5, and 7 include senses of obligation; while 3 and 4 express necessities, and warning in 6. Through the use of such agentive modals, the female protagonist appears in a command position, and is able to set up her priorities and decisions with a pervasive force.

1) "I *can teach* my little Pearl" (ME, 108).

2) "Now I *can stretch out* my hand and [can] *grasp* some of it" (ME, 179).

3) "I *cannot pay* it" (ME, 176).

Next in line is the modal of ability "can" that was evident in three different examples. It protruded mental and physical ability of Hester in the first two examples, and her manifest incapability to fulfil an agentive action in the third example based on the negative form, which often undercuts agency.

### 2.2.3. Transitivity

The previous passages of active dynamic verbs are also transitive, which implies an enhanced agentive role of the protagonist. Transitivity choices contribute to the significant command of Hester of her entire surrounding life events, especially when her actions impact human objects. To illustrate, several passages indicate her daughter, Pearl, as the object like in

5, 7, 13, 18, 23, 45, 48, 49, and 55. In addition, a decent number of passages indicate

characters like Arthur Dimmesdale, Roger Chillingworth, Mistress Hibbins, and several minor

characters as human objects as in 1, 19, 22, 35, 39, 40, 57, 58, 72, 73, 76, and 77. Besides

external objects like humans and inanimate objects, Hester's actions often affect parts of her

body like eyes, head, arms, and face in these passages 3, 4, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 25, 59, and 67.

Hawthorne's syntactic choices of his protagonist's body parts as objects might insinuate that

she cannot relatively exercise any effective control on external objects, as Halliday states:

"[...] master of nothing but [her] own body" (Halliday 130). The remaining object entities in

the passages are generally inanimate objects, and mostly the scarlet letter. All in all, the

author opted for transitive verbs to suggest a sense of control, yet he did not allow his

character's actions to have an impact on external and human objects most of the time.

## 2.2.4. Intransitivity

Nathaniel Hawthorne opted for transitive as well as intransitive syntactic choices in

the development of his protagonist. Intransitivity suggests that events are subject-based;

therefore, despite the use of dynamic verbs by Hester Prynne, they have no external effect on

any type of objects. In particular, the following passages include dynamic intransitive verbs in

the active voice that were used by the protagonist:

1) "Hester Prynne *set forth* towards the place" (ME, 56).

2) "Hester Prynne *set forth* from her solitary cottage" (ME, 99).

3) "Hester [...] *set forth"* (ME, 178).

4) "She *fled* for refuge" (ME, 64).

5) "She *issued* from the prison" (ME, 55).

6) "She [...] *stepped into* the open air" (ME, 54).

7) "Hester *turned* again" (ME, 206).

8)  "She [...] *turned* partly round" (ME, 257).

9)  "She *turned* to the young clergyman" (ME, 111).

10) "Thus Hester Prynne [...] *turned* aside" (ME, 162).

11) "Hester Prynne *passed* through this portion" (ME, 56).

12) "As she *passed* near a venerable minister" (ME, 86).

13) "She [...] *passed* on" (ME, 158).

14) "Hester Prynne [...] *drew* near" (ME, 248).

15) "Hester Prynne *went* one day to the mansion" (ME, 98).

16) "She [...] *went* in" (ME, 257).

17) "I *am* now *going* homeward" (ME, 149).

18) "Hester Prynne [...] *came* to a sort of scaffold" (ME, 56).

19)  "She *came* forth into the sunshine" (ME, 77).

20) "Hester Prynne *came*" (ME, 83).

21) "She *came* into the household" (ME, 157).

22) "What she *came* to say" (ME, 188).

23) "Where she *roamed* as freely" (ME, 195).

24) "She *glided* shadow-like" (ME, 257).

25) "Hester Prynne [...] *paused*" (ME, 248).

26) "She *submitted* uncomplainingly" (ME, 156).

27) "Then she *spoke* aloud" (ME, 176).

28) "She [...] *spoke*" (ME, 188).

29) "I [...] did *hold* fast" (ME, 189).

30) "Thus Hester Prynne [...] *wandered* without a clue" (ME, 162).

31) "Hester Prynne yet *struggled*" (ME, 87).

32) "Hester sometimes *burst* into passionate tears" (ME, 91).

33) "Like one who [...] has *failed* to win the master-word" (ME, 91).

34) "She *forbore* to pray for enemies" (ME, 84).

35) "She [...] did *refrain* from covering the symbol" (ME, 85).

36) "She *shuddered* to believe" (ME, 86).

37) "Hester Prynne [...] *cried out"* (ME, 94).

38) "She *advanced"* (ME, 206)

39) "I *have striven* to be true!" (ME, 189).

40) "Desperate joy with which she *seized*, [she] *hastened* to bar it" (ME, 80).

41) "Her mother *stooped* over the cradle" (ME, 95).

42) "What I *have learned"* (ME, 108).

43) "Her mother, who *was looking on"* (ME, 113).

In total, the author employed 30 dynamic intransitive verbs up to 44 times to build his protagonist's dialogue and narration, and the human agent is often disempowered by such syntactic limitations. That is to say; despite the use of dynamic verbs, their actions were practically limited to Hester. Most of the verbs are activity verbs like go, set forth, flee, step into, pass, come, roam, wander, advance, turn, look on, and issue, while others are bodily sensation verbs like tremble and shudder. Hence, the agentive role of Hester was foregrounded by this set of intransitive dynamic verbs. It is worth noting that certain verbs like failed, fled, submitted, refrain, struggled, ceased, shuddered, trembled, and wandered without clue might have been selected intentionally by the author. In other words, Hawthorne virtually selected this particular grammatical choice in order to generate a specific image of his protagonist. Namely, readers would picture Hester Prynne to be a perseverant, enduring, and an unrelenting character because she did not just comply with her designated social position after the scandal. Instead, she endeavoured to establish a quiet life for her and her daughter without feeling urged to leave the town. To sum up, although intransitive choices of

the verbs contrast with the definition of a complete agentive action due to the absence of an object, the presence of a human agent as a subject can still substantially indicate a sense of control, even if it is only an internal subjective control.

## 2.3. Analysis of the Uses of Passivity Devices

As previously mentioned, Nathaniel Hawthorne has employed multiple linguistic features in the process of his main character's development, namely syntactic choices that either foreground or suppress the agency of Hester Prynne. Thus, in addition to the devices that highlighted her agency, the narrative also includes several linguistic features that undercut her agency. To illustrate, this part shall present a qualitative and quantitative analysis of stative verbs, negation, perfect aspect, passive voice, uncertainty modals, and subjunctive mood.

### 2.3.1. Stative Verbs

While dynamic verbs have been utilized to describe the basic physical and mental activities of Hester Prynne, the author endeavoured to employ stative verbs as well, in an attempt to portray the state of his protagonist. Their use usually suggests the passivity and powerlessness of their user because they tend to be character-based, since they indicate states and conditions, instead of physical action-based. When the set of stative verbs used in Hester Prynne's narration and dialogue was considered, it could be seen that Hawthorne used stative intransitive verbs, stative transitive verbs, as well as linking verbs, or copula verbs, interchangeably. Hence, the following passages will include them in separate lists accordingly.

### 2.3.1.1. Stative intransitive verbs

The first group of samples shall exhibit the total use of stative intransitive verbs in the novel.

1) "She [...] *sat* erect" (ME, 96).

2) "The mother of this child *stood* fully revealed" (ME, 54).

3) "Hester Prynne [...] who *stood*" (ME, 60).

4) "The platform on which Hester Prynne *stood*" (ME, 65).

5) "She [...] *stood* on the platform" (ME, 149).

6) "Wherever Hester *stood*" (ME, 230).

7) "Hester *stood*" (ME, 240).

8) "While Hester *stood*" (ME, 243).

9) "While she *stood* gazing after the crooked figure" (ME, 172).

10) "Hester Prynne was standing" (ME, 230).

11) "Hester Prynne was standing" (ME, 245).

12) "She [...] *trembled*" (ME, 65).

13) "As she still *hesitated*" (ME, 72).

14) "Hester [...] *hesitated* to speak" (ME, 87).

15) "Again she *hesitated*" (ME, 188).

16) "Hester *looked* by way of humouring the child" (ME, 104).

17) "She *wondered* what sort of herbs" (ME, 171).

18) "Hester Prynne *remained* constant in her resolve" (ME, 177).

19) "Hester *smiled* to perceive" (ME, 179).

20) "She *smiled* drearily" (ME, 186).

21) "Hester *smiled*" (ME, 199).

22) "She *succeeded*" (ME, 184).

23) "Then I *consented* to a deception" (ME, 189).

24) "Her spirit *sank*" (ME, 235).

25) "Hester Prynne *listened* with such intenseness" (ME, 239).

26) "Hester Prynne [...] *sympathized* so intimately" (ME, 239).

27) "The wearer of the scarlet letter *disappeared*" (ME, 256).

In general, stative verbs are frequent in this novel, yet only 14 stative verbs used by Hester Prynne are intransitive and occur 27 times. Most of the verbs showcase the multiple states of the protagonist, like standing, sitting, succeeding, consenting, disappearing, and remaining. In addition to the decent use of attitude verbs like hesitate, tremble, sympathize, and smile, as well as sensory perception verbs like listen. It can be noticed that these verbs undercut Hester's agency and portray her as mentally and physically passive. Certain verbs like hesitate, tremble, and wonder give readers the impression that the character is undetermined and indecisive, hence passive. Furthermore, intransitivity choices in these passages are further indicators of passivity because they disable subjects from causing any effects. In brief, intransitive use of stative verbs secludes human agents from conducting internal and external actions and settles for depicting their conditions and states.

### 2.3.1.1.1. Linking Verbs

Linking or copular verbs are a subcategory of stative intransitive verbs because they take predicates instead of objects.

1) "She *was* silent" (ME, 153).

2) "She *was* terror Stricken by the revelations" (ME, 86).

3) "Hester *was* ultimately compelled to stand aside" (ME, 90).

4) "She [...] *was* ready to defend them to the death" (ME, 110).

5) "Her whole soul *was* moved" (ME, 156).

6) "She *was* quick to acknowledge her sisterhood with the race of man" (ME, 157).

7) "She *was* self-ordained a Sister of Mercy" (ME, 158).

8) "I *was* frank with thee" (ME, 74).

9) "Her mind [...] *was* preternaturally active" (ME, 59).

10) "The woman *has been* a dweller" (ME, 63).

11) "She *was* conscious of a shelter" (ME, 64).

12) "She *was* about to win her freedom" (ME, 223).

13) "The fact that she *had been* able to discern no method of rescuing him" (ME, 163).

14) "She who *has* once *been* a woman" (ME, 160).

15) "Her mother [...] *had* long *been* a familiar object" (ME, 156).

16) "Hester's first motion *had been* to cover her bosom" (ME, 96).

17) "Hester Prynne [...] *was* startled to perceive what a change had come" (ME, 110).

18) "Hester *felt* [...] estranged" (ME, 203).

19) "She *felt* herself no longer so inadequate" (ME, 163).

20) "She *felt*, at moments, as if she must needs shriek out" (ME, 59).

21) "Did she *feel* the innumerable throbs of anguish" (ME, 84).

22) "It made Hester Prynne *feel* as if it could not be the image" (ME, 104).

23) "She *felt* an eye [...] on the ignominious brand" (ME, 85).

24) "Hester Prynne [...] *felt* a dreary influence" (ME, 235).

25) "Until she *felt* the freedom!" (ME, 198).

26) "She *felt* that [...] he was next to treat with her" (ME, 74).

27) "Then she *was* sure of her, and *tasted* hours of quiet [...] happiness" (ME, 92).

28) "Hester *felt* that the sacrifice" (ME, 189).

29) "She *felt* a morbid desire to ascertain the Point" (ME, 174).

30) "She *felt* that she possessed indefeasible right" (ME, 110).

31) "She *grew* to have a dread of children" (ME, 85).

32) "Her mother [...] *grew* acquainted with a certain peculiar look" (ME, 90).

33) "She [...] *grew* pale" (ME, 79).

34) "The unhappy woman *grew* pale" (ME, 65).

35) "She *seemed* conscious" (ME, 65).

36) "Hester [...] *seemed* to see" (ME, 156).

37) "She *appeared* to recognize him" (ME, 62).

It is perhaps worth noting that certain linking verbs can be intransitive stative verbs too. Especially that they have subject complements instead of objects, and these predicates, adjective or nominative, refer to the state of the subject. Accordingly, the list above comprises of linking verbs that were employed in the passages of Hester. Nathaniel Hawthorne used six linking, or copular, verbs that occurred 38 times; the verbs are to be, to feel, to seem, to appear, to grow, and to taste in different tenses. They were followed by both adjective complements like 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 17, 18, 19, 27, 32, 33, 34, and 35; as well as nominative complements like 10, 14, 15, 21, 23, 24, 25, 28, and 29. The use of linking verbs is relatively frequent in the narrative, which consolidates the sense of Hester's static character and passive reactions. Finally, the total number of stative intransitive verbs is 20 verbs that occurred around 65 times.

### 2.3.1.2. Stative Transitive Verbs

Despite that stative verbs do not perform actions, or affect external entities; they can provide a significant insight into individuals' states.

1) She *hath* good skill at her needle (ME, 55).

2) She *had* dark and abundant hair (ME, 54).

3) "I will keep thy secret as I *have* his [secret]" (ME, 77).

4) "Oh, I *have* much to tell thee about her!" (ME, 206).

5) "She *had* in her nature a rich, voluptuous, Oriental characteristic" (ME, 83).

6) "Hester Prynne *had* always this dreadful agony in feeling a human eye" (ME, 85).

7) "She perchance *underwent* an agony" (ME, 56).

8) "She *longed* rather to behold all those rigid countenances" (ME, 58).

9) "She [...] *strove* to cast it from her" (ME, 80).

10) "The unhappy culprit *sustained* herself" (ME, 58).

11) "While Hester Prynne *sustained* her punishment" (ME, 144).

12) "She *saw* again her native village" (ME, 59).

13) "She *saw* her father's face" (ME, 59).

14) "She *saw* her own face" (ME, 60).

15) "She *saw* that" (ME, 104).

16) "She *saw* that he stood on the verge of lunacy" (1 ME, 63).

17) "Before she *saw* him" (ME, 61).

18) "I *see* what ails the child" (ME, 206).

19) "As many hours as she *saw* fit" (ME, 82).

20) "Hester *saw* [...] that there lay a responsibility" (ME, 156).

21) "Which she *owned* to no other" (ME, 156).

22) "She [...] *fancied* that the scarlet letter had endowed her" (ME, 86).

23) "There she *beheld* another countenance" (ME, 60).

24) "She *fancied* that she *beheld* [...] another face" (ME, 95).

25) "She *beheld* the old physician with a basket" (ME, 164).

26) "She *beheld* the minister advancing" (ME, 183).

27) "She *beheld* old Roger Chillingworth" (ME, 231).

28) "She [...] even *touched* it with her finger" (ME, 60).

29) "Walks which she *knew* him to be in" (ME, 178).

30) "I *know* it!" (ME, 199).

31) "But I *know* whose brow she has!" (ME, 201).

32) "She *knew* that her deed had been evil" (ME, 88).

33) "She *knew* that there was love in the child's heart" (ME, 113).

34) "She [...] *dreaded* the moment" (ME, 64).

35) "Partly that she *dreaded* the secret" (ME, 178).

36) "This voice, which she too surely *recognised*" (ME, 69).

37) "The feet of one with whom she *deemed* herself connected in a union" (ME, 80).

38) "She *deemed* it her crime most to be repented of" (ME, 172).

39) "What she *compelled* herself to believe" (ME, 80).

40) "With some slender means that she *possessed*" (ME, 80).

41) "She *possessed* an art that sufficed" (ME, 81).

42) "She *possessed* indefeasible rights against the world" (ME, 110).

43) "Although she *understood* it well" (ME, 84).

44) "But she *named* the infant 'Pearl'" (ME, 88).

45) "To which she *owed* her being" (ME, 88).

46) "Her mother so *imagined* it" (ME, 96).

47) "She *remembered*--betwixt a smile and a shudder" (ME, 97).

48) "She *remembered* her oath" (ME, 153).

49) "What she best *remembered* in him" (ME, 165).

50) "I *remember* it" (ME, 203).

51) "Pearl! I *hear* voices in the garden" (ME, 105).

52) "I *hear* a footstep along the path" (ME, 182).

53) "She *found* the clergyman reduced" (ME, 155).

54) "The outcast of society at once *found* her place" (ME, 157).

55) "Hester's nature *showed* itself warm" (ME, 157).

56) "Her face [...] *showed* the marble quietude" (ME, 222).

57) "Hester Prynne *imbibed* this spirit" (ME, 161).

58) "She *assumed* a freedom" (ME, 161).

59) "She *discerns*, it may be, such a hopeless task" (ME, 162).

60) "She *determined* to redeem her error" (ME, 163).

61) "Hester Prynne *resolved* to meet her former husband" (ME, 163).

62) "That I thus *bound* myself" (ME, 166).

63) "The despair which she *expressed*" (ME, 169).

64) "I *hate* the man!" (ME, 171).

65) "Yes, I *hate* him" (ME, 172).

66) "She *upbraided* herself for the sentiment" (ME, 171).

67) "She *marvelled* how such scenes could have been! She *marvelled* how she could have been wrought upon" (ME, 172).

68) *"Thought* Hester" (ME, 176).

69) *"Thought* Hester to herself" (ME, 176).

70) "She *thought* of those long-past days" (ME, 171).

71) "She *thought* of the dim forest" (ME, 235).

72) "I *have thought* of death [...] *have wished* for it" (ME, 73).

73) "Her conscious heart *imparted* suspicion" (ME, 178).

74) "As she *attempted* to do so" (ME, 179).

75) "She *conquered* her fears" (ME, 188).

76) "Still she *bore* it all" (ME, 190).

77) "Hester *heaved* a long, deep sigh" (ME, 198)

78) "Startled more than she *permitted* to appear" (ME, 231).

79) "Hester *saw* and *recognized* the selfsame Faces" (ME, 242).

80) "Hester *comforted* [...] them [...] *assured* them" (ME, 259).

81) "Hester Prynne [...] *glanced* her sad eyes [...] at the scarlet letter" (ME, 259).

82) "What she *suffered*" (ME, 156).

83) "Her mother half *doubted* whether she" (ME, 97).

84) "Hester *gazed after* him" (ME, 171).

85) "As still she *gazed after* him" (ME, 171).

86) "More [...] than she *cared* to be favoured with, or [...] than she *deserved*"(ME, 158).

87) "Madame Hester absolutely *refuseth* to speak" (ME, 63).

88) "What, finally, she *reasoned upon* as her motive" (ME, 80).

This list of stative transitive verbs insinuates that Hester Prynne "does not act but experiences" (Mills119). In total, Hawthorne utilized 52 various transitive stative verbs that occurred 94 times; hence they consolidated the general sense of Hester Prynne's passivity and lack of actions. In particular, the syntactic choices of Hawthorne practically represented the state of Hester through psychological verbs. According to Leech and Short, the latter category comprises of the following three sub-categories: verbs of thought, perception, and feeling (89). To illustrate, one can notice the frequent use of thought verbs like think, know, understand, remember, imagine, assume, resolve, doubt, reason, fancy, and deem; in addition to perception verbs like see, behold, touch, glance, gaze, hear, show, and look; and finally, feeling verbs like dread, hate, care, wish, sustain, underwent, suffer, bear (i.e., endure), and long.  Although these verbs are mostly passive stative in nature, we can still notice that they elucidate the implicit psychological dynamicity of the protagonist, especially through verbs like sustain, bear, resolve, strive, refuse, compel, and determine. In addition to this variety of verbs and functions, we can also identify relational verbs in the text like have,

possess, own, owe, and deserve. Besides referring to static conditions, these verbs necessitate a syntactic structure with two entities i.e., subject and object; hence they are both stative and transitive.

The verbs included in the list are a combination of prepositional verbs like gazed after, and reasoned upon; in addition to single-word verbs, which is the most frequent in the list. In addition, objects differ according to verbs structure where we can notice a decent use of nouns and infinitive phrases, after verbs like strove to, longed to, resolved to, and determined to, that act as objects. Consequently, these stative transitive verbs practically imply a sense of powerlessness and submission from the speaker's part. In particular, the narrative structure of the main character has been elaborated for the reader to keep up with the emotional journey of a puritan female sinner. The latter chooses silent treatment as her weapon in the face of her patriarchal community, which further proceed in considering her a sinner even after her repentance, imprisonment, and public shaming with the letter 'A.' She faces human cruelty with resistance, indulgence, and beneficence, instead of succumbing to her imposed exile of life. While her actions disable her from the proper exercise of external control and power, Hester's internalized processes, whether sensory, cognitive, or emotional, usually manifest her psychologically forceful character.

### 2.3.2. Negation

While affirmative forms highlight dynamicity, negative forms contrast them to undercut any feature of agency. Negatives can be classified into two major types: explicit and implicit negations, but this part shall be concerned with the former mainly. Accordingly, explicit negations category comprises a diversity of sub-categories like full negatives, Absolute negatives, quasi negatives, partial negatives, and words with negative implication (Ding 1202), in addition to auxiliary negation ( Quirk et al. 335). However, this analysis shall

be constrained to three types exclusively: quasi negatives, full negatives, and auxiliary negations.

1) "She *scarcely* heard a voice behind her" (ME, 64).

2) "She could *scarcely* forgive him" (ME, 235).

3) "She could *scarcely* refrain" (ME, 85).

4) "She *hardly* knew why" (ME, 76).

5) "I *hardly* comprehend her!" (ME, 199).

6) "She *hardly* knew him" (ME, 235).

7) "Hester had *vainly* imagined" (ME, 258).

8) "She *vainly* sought an opportunity" (ME, 178).

9) "She *barely* looked the idea in the face" (ME, 80).

10) "Hester had *never* felt a moment's safety" (ME, 95).

11) "And *never* had Hester Prynne appeared more ladylike" (ME, 55).

12) *"Never*, until now, had she bethought herself to ask, whether" (ME, 176).

13) "Hester Prynne had *never* before been false" (ME, 177).

14) "She had *never* permitted to herself before" (ME, 177).

15) "Hester *never* thought of meeting him" (ME, 178).

16) *"Nor ever* will, my child, I hope" (ME, 179).

17) "Luxury such as Hester *never* cared to use" (ME, 258).

18) "She *never* raised her head to receive their greeting" (ME, 158).

19) "She *never* responded to these attacks" (ME, 84).

20) "She could have *no* faith" (ME, 88).

21) "She could find *no* balm in this world, *nor* knew how to seek it in another" (ME, 96).

22) "The mother did *not* seem to hear it" (ME, 61).

23) "I have *none* to give thee!" (ME, 102).

24) "A woman who [...] hath *none* of that mystery of hidden sinfulness" (ME, 132).

25) "Hester Prynne did *not* now occupy precisely the same position" (ME, 156).

26) "She did *not* weigh upon its sympathies" (ME, 156).

27) *"Neither* the world *nor* she looked forward to this result" (ME, 158).

28) "She was *not* there" (ME, 158).

29) *"Nor* do I perceive such advantage" (ME, 169).

30) "She doubted *not* that the continual presence of Roger Chillingworth" (ME, 188).

31) "She had *not* died" (ME, 199).

32) "I deem it *not* likely that he will" (ME, 191).

33) "She had *not* known the weight" (ME, 198).

34) "Madam, I know *not* of what you speak" (ME, 237).

35) "Hester Prynne had *no* selfish ends, *nor* lived in any measure" (ME, 258).

36) "I felt *no* love, *nor* feigned any" (ME, 74).

37) "[...] whence she knew *not*" (ME, 235).

38) "I *will not* speak" (ME, 69).

39) "I will *not* give her up [...] I will *not* lose the child! [...]I will *not* lose the child!" (ME, 111).

40) "She could *not* but tremble at these preparations" (ME, 74).

41) "She could *not* endure this last quiet stab" (ME, 74).

42) "She might *not* otherwise have acknowledged to herself" (ME, 172).

43) "She [...] could *not* overcome, or lessen it" (ME, 171).

44) "She could *not* satisfy herself" (ME, 174).

45) "What Hester could *not* bear, and live" (ME, 190).

46) "Hester sought *not* to acquire anything beyond a subsistence" (ME, 82).

47) "Hurts for which she could find *no* balm in this world" (ME, 96).

48) "She could *not* but tremble at these preparations" (ME, 74).

49) "Hester would *not* set him free" (ME, 190).

50) "She could *no* longer borrow from the future to help her" (ME, 78).

51) "Hester could *not* resolve the query" (ME, 97).

52) "Hester could *not* but ask herself" (ME, 163).

In addition to the examination of verbal syntactic choices that undermine the role of the female protagonist, syntactic negation is an additional feature of her passivity. For instance, the quasi negatives present in the list are the following adverbs: scarcely x3, hardly x3, vainly x2, and barely x1. Their use causes readers to associate Hester with traits of helplessness and restricted exercise of power; thus, her actions are often left unfulfilled or useless. If we inspect the passages with "hardly," we can notice that it is used with cognitive verbs "know and comprehend", which gives an impression of Hester's passive cognitive processing of incidents around her. She constantly seems incognizant of the surrounding events, hence unable to impose her demands. Besides, adverbs "scarcely and barely" propose a possibility of complete actions that were not fulfilled at the end. Negation, in this sense, is not ultimate like the case of other negation words, but still attains its function. Moving to full negatives, the narrative depicts a frequent use of negative words like never x10, not x10, no x3, nor x6, none x2, neither x1, and ever x1. Their use, unlike the former, manifests an absolute sense of negation that leaves the character absolutely powerless and unable to complete her actions, demands, and wishes. Therefore, the dominant effect of negatives is passivity and incapability of completing actions. Finally, auxiliary negations are another recurrent feature in the list, which is a combination of mainly could x12, will x4, would x1, and might x1. Functions of capability, volition, and possibility have been completely deprived of their relatively limited agency by being used in their negative forms. Nevertheless, certain negative sentences display an affirmative commanding position of Hester like declaring her

firm unwillingness to succumb to any decision that could deprive her of her child "I will not give her up, I will not lose this child." Another example is "I will not speak," that demonstrates her challenging character refusing to reveal a secret steadfastly. All in all, the textual inspection of negation revealed a total of 15 different negative features that occurred 60 times. These syntactic choices foster the passivity and impotency of Hester regarding her surrounding circumstances and propose a sense of her inherent lack of agency.

### 2.3.3. Perfect Aspect

Verb tenses can have differentiated grammatical functions according to their contexts, and one of them is undercutting agency. In particular, the narrative encompasses a variety of tenses, yet one of the frequently used is the past perfect. Its use lessens the degree of Hester Prynne's agency and consolidates her essentially passive role; accordingly, this part shall explore the perfect aspect in the narration of Hester's character.

1) "Hester Prynne *had* immediately *become* as still as death" (ME, 71).

2) "Her Pearl--for so *had* Hester *called*" (ME, 88).

3) "Features that she *had known* full well" (ME, 95).

4) "Her mother [...] *had allowed* the [...] tendencies of her imagination" (ME, 100).

5) "She *had* familiarly *known* him" (ME, 110).

6) "Hester Prynne, likewise, *had* involuntarily *looked up*" (ME, 113).

7) "The spot where, now so long since, Hester Prynne *had lived*"(ME, 143).

8) "She *had witnessed* the intense misery" (ME, 163).

9) "That she *had* ever *endured* and [...] *had suffered* the smile of her lips" (ME, 172).

10) "She *had* so often *remarked* in her black eyes" (ME, 174).

11) "Hester *had* often *fancied*" (ME, 176).

12) "She *had looked* from this estranged point of view" (ME, 195).

13) "She *had imagined*" (ME, 235).

14) "She *had dreamed* it" (ME, 235).

15) "She [...] *had* long since *recognised"* (ME, 259).

16) "Her shadow *had faded* across the threshold" (ME, 158).

17) "But Hester Prynne [...], *had habituated* herself to such latitude" (ME, 195).

18) *"Had* Hester *contrived* so perfectly to represent the scarlet letter" (ME, 100).

19) "What a change *had come* over his features" (ME, 110).

20) "Hester Prynne *had encountered* the world's ignominious stare" (ME, 247).

21) "Hester Prynne *had* so long *worn* the scarlet letter" (ME, 255).

22) "Purity than that which she *had lost"* (ME, 80).

23) "Hester Prynne *had dwelt"* (ME, 257).

24) "Hester Prynne *had returned*, and [*had*] *taken up* her [...] shame!" (ME, 257).

25) "She *had returned*, therefore, and [*had*] *resumed"* (ME, 258).

26) "Her attire, which indeed, she *had wrought* [...] and *had modelled"* (ME, 55).

27) "The mother [...] *had* carefully *wrought out* the similitude" (ME, 100).

28) "The infant that she *had borne"* (ME, 58).

29) "She *had borne* that morning" (ME, 70).

30) "Hester Prynne *had borne"* (ME, 71).

31) "It is certain that she *had* ready and fairly *requited* employment" (ME, 82).

32) "Hester *had schooled* herself long and well" (ME, 82).

33) "The mother [...], *had schooled* herself to hope for" (ME, 175).

34) "She *had sinned* anew" (ME, 86).

35) "The scarlet letter *had endowed* her with a new sense" (ME, 86).

36) "Her mother [...] *had bought* the richest tissues" (ME, 89).

37) "She *had fortified* herself to encounter the stings" (ME, 58).

38) "She *had* already *told* Roger Chillingworth [...] which she *had taken upon* herself" (ME, 189).

39) "She *had* most deeply and irreparably *injured"* (ME, 74).

40) "Her sin, her ignominy, were the roots which she *had struck into* the soil" (ME, 79).

41) "Gloves which she *had fringed* and [*had*] *embroidered* to his order" (ME, 98).

42) "Hester Prynne, [...] *had begun* to inform her of those truths" (ME, 109).

43) "Those whom she *had served*" (ME, 158).

44) "She *had made* her choice, and *had chosen* [...] the more wretched alternative" (ME, 163).

45) "She *had climbed* her way since then to a higher point" (ME, 163).

46) "Meanwhile her mother *had accosted* the physician" (ME, 164).

47) "She *had* [...] *reciprocated* the lukewarm grasp of his hand" (ME, 172).

48) "Which Hester *had fought* against" (ME, 179).

49) "Hester *had emerged*, and [*had*] *sat down* on the heap of moss" (ME, 186).

50) "The ruin to which she *had brought* the man" (ME, 189).

51) "She *had wandered* without rule" (ME, 195).

52) "Hester *had spoken* [...].She *had flung* it *into* infinite space! She *had drawn* an hour's free breath" (ME, 207).

53) "All this while Hester *had been looking* steadily at the old man" (ME, 165).

54) "While this passed, Hester Prynne *had been standing* on her pedestal" (ME, 64).

55) "Along which she *had been treading* since her happy infancy" (ME, 59).

56) "Her mother felt like one who *has evoked* a spirit, but [...] *has failed* to win the master-word" (ME, 91).

57) "She who *has* once *been* a woman, and [has] *ceased* to be so" (ME, 160).

These passages demonstrate how the perfect tense was employed to undermine the agentive participation of Hester. For instance, textual evidence indicates a major use of past perfect particularly, besides minor uses of present perfect and present perfect progressive. The verbs conjugated are both stative and dynamic verbs; to illustrate, 20 stative verbs are used 21 times, and 37 dynamic verbs are used 41 times. As discussed in the previous parts, the stative verbs category is already a passivity indicator, which means that its combination with the perfect tense intensifies the effect of the character's passivity. Concerning dynamic verbs, their effect cannot be practically possible since they are used perfectively. In *Meaning and the English Verb*, Leech describes the past perfect as "past in past" (53) because its use suggests events that finished in a specific time frame in the past, and it is no longer prolonged. Therefore, despite the continual use of dynamic verbs, Hester still seems lacking an animated position because they are used perfectively. The verbs used are fight, bring, choose, serve, and injure; which postulate the expired availability of those actions and their irrelevancy in the present time (Kies). To sum up, the total number of verbs in the past perfect is 57, which occurred 62 times after considering the cases of ellipsis, yet there are two other perfect tenses in the list: present perfect and past perfect progressive. As for present perfect use, it is often relevant in the present time, like Leech describes it: "past involving the present" (Leech 53). In the list, there are 4 verbs used 4 times: be, fail, cease, and evoke, and they function as results of incomplete actions. In other words, although this tense relates past with present, the verbs used "has failed, has ceased to be" carry implicit negation, which also undermines agency. Finally, there are 3 uses of past perfect progressive, which stands for an action that has lasted for a certain time span, but finished in a past point of reference. In specific, two of the verbs are stative "look & stand," and they suggest a temporariness of states, while the remaining one is dynamic "tread," and signifies a past habitual action based on the use of "since." It is perhaps worth noting that Hawthorne's passive syntactic choices are constantly

recurring, hence delimiting the female protagonist's activity. The perfective use of 64 verbs that occur 69 times in total depicts Hester Prynne as a character whose agentive and active role had ceased to function, and she is often obliged to exist in silent acquiescence.

### 2.3.4. Passive Voice

Certain grammatical features can be accounted for to differentiate between agentive and passive grammatical units, especially active and passive voices. In specific, the passive voice has a substantial function in foregrounding the receiver instead of action, or doer, as claimed by Kies: "the passive is useful when the writer desires to conceal the agent" (Kies 305). Thus, its use is usually regarded as a passivity indicator, and Hawthorne's narrative comprises of decent passive sentences that shall be listed below.

#### 2.3.4.1. Passive Dynamics

Dynamic verbs have already been classified as one the linguistic entities that highlight agency in the first part, yet they only function as agentive verbs when they are in the active voice. On the other hand, if dynamic verbs are in the passive voice, their effect diminishes to become passive as well. Hence, we shall examine passive dynamic verbs in the following passages to explore their suppression of Hester's agency.

1) "These years in which she *had been set apart* to infamy" (ME, 157).

2) "After the lees of bitterness wherewith she *had been drugged*" (ME, 223).

3) "Once Hester *was seen* embroidering a baby-garment" (ME, 258).

4) "She *was led* back to prison" (ME, 70).

5) "She [...] *was* thus *displayed* to the surrounding multitude" (ME, 57).

6) "Where she *was made* the common infamy" (ME, 78).

7) "She [...] *was* immediately *constrained* to give all her attention" (ME, 110).

8) "Hester *was constrained* to rush towards the child" (ME, 91).

9) "A halo of the misfortune and ignominy in which she *was enveloped"* (ME, 55).

10) *"Had* Hester *been tortured* [...] by the same illusion" (ME, 96).

11) "She *was supported* by an unnatural tension of the nerves" (ME, 78).

### 2.3.4.2. Stative passives

Stative verbs category has already been analyzed as a category that promotes passivity previously in this chapter. Thus, if stative verbs are passivized, they will further reinforce the task of agency suppression. Hence, their use in this novel will be analyzed subsequently.

1) "She *had been wont* to gaze at it" (ME, 60).

2) "The wearer of the scarlet letter *was* at length *relieved* by discerning [...] a figure which irresistibly took possession of her thoughts" (ME, 61).

3) "This woman [...] *was* strongly *tempted* to her fall" (ME, 63).

4) "Hester Prynne *was found* to be in a state of nervous excitement" (ME, 70).

5) "The token which Hester Prynne *was doomed* to wear" (ME, 100).

6) "Hester Prynne *was shocked* at the condition [of] the clergyman" (ME, 155).

7) "Which she *was entitled* to hold intercourse in" (ME, 157).

8) "Hester Prynne [...] *was shocked* [...] to discern what a change" (ME, 165).

9) "She *was* also *subjected* to another trial" (ME, 242).

One can notice that the active voice is used more often than the passive voice; however, it still has an effect on the overall meaning of Hester's character narration. To begin with, textual evidence shows the use of the two major verb types as follows: dynamic passives and stative passives. In total, there are two tenses used passively, past simple in the form of was + past participle, and past perfect in the form of had been + past participle. Hence, the process of passivisation consolidates Hester Prynne's powerless character because it

reinforces results and actions embedded in the verbs, and often disregards the doer. In these passages, Hester Prynne is merely a receiver of actions, whose dynamicity is suppressed by agent by-phrases three times; while the remaining sentences lack any expressed agents. Particularly, there are 10 dynamic passives whose verbs occur 11 times, and two of them include expressed agents; while there are only 8 stative passives whose verbs occur 9 times, and they are generally left without explicit by-phrases.

Concerning dynamic passives category, the $10^{th}$ and $11^{th}$ sentences include by-phrases that are composed of the inanimate objects nerves and illusion, which do not only lack appropriate animate agent characteristics, but they are also linked to the internal composition of the character, her mental faculty. On the other hand, we can infer that most implicit agents are humans from the nature of verbs used in the remaining sentences. Semantically speaking, participles like seen, drugged, led, displayed, made, and set apart hold a sense of human objects based on their contexts. We can justify the author's choice of omitting agent by-phrases with a plethora of reasons, but if we consider that the passive use in this novel merely signifies the character's passivity, then one appropriate reason would be that: "[it is more significant to] focus on the object rather than on the subject (i.e. of the corresponding active sentence)" (Hollmann 2). In other words, we intend to describe and analyse the syntactic passivisation of the female protagonist, instead of other contributing grammatical units.

Moving to stative passives, there will not be a major difference between the function of stative verbs in active and passive voices, in the sense that they have nearly identical function: showcasing state and condition. In fact, the past participle of stative verbs does not always operate as a verb participle, but also as an adjective (Kies 303). As an illustration, the participles "found and entitled" are used in the adjectival sense, especially that there is not a possibility to form their active corresponding. Nevertheless, the rest of passages consist of real participles that have active corresponding for example: "the condition of the clergyman

shocked Hester Prynne" is a possible active counterpart of the 6th passage. Besides, the 2ⁿᵈ passage listed consists of the only expressed human agent by-phrase. All in all, the narrative includes up to a total of 18 dynamic and stative verbs that occur 20 times in the passive forms of past simple and past perfect. Their function silenced Hester Prynne's agentive voice, and rendered her a passive recipient; especially that this syntactic feature portrays texts' meanings imprecisely, which serves passivity uses.

### 2.3.5. Modals

Modality is another distinctive passivity feature that appears in the novel with its distinct function of uncertainty, and doubt. For instance, hedging is one of its pervasive effects on the overall meaning, especially because it lessens the assertive tone of statements (Kies). Accordingly, the following list shall include the use of modal auxiliaries to deprive Hester Prynne from her power and control of actions. It shall present dynamic as well as stative verbs because although the former category is usually linked to activity, it can also be accompanied with linguistic elements that undermine its dynamicity and agency like uncertainty modals like may might, could, and would.

1) "'What evil thing is at hand?' *would* Hester *say* to herself" (ME, 86).

2) "She *would detect* the eyes of a young maiden" (ME, 87).

3) "With an agony which *she would* fain *have hidden"* (ME, 94).

4) "I *would speak* a word with you" (ME, 164).

5) "Her spirit *could* only *shelter* itself" (ME, 70).

6) "There was [...] demand for such labour as Hester Prynne *could supply*" (ME, 82).

7) "Before Hester Prynne *could call together* her thoughts" (ME, 231).

8) "Before Hester Prynne *could gather* voice enough" (ME, 183).

9) "Hester Prynne [...] *could take upon* herself to secure the passage" (ME, 210).

10) "How she *could* ever *have been wrought* upon to marry him!" (ME, 172).

11) "The people's victim [...] *might say* to them" (ME, 222).

12) "I *might have held* fast" (ME, 189).

13) "She *might call up* the vital strength" (ME, 78).

14) "She *might have come down* to us" (ME, 161).

15) "She *might* readily *have applied* to the better efforts of her art" (ME, 83).

16) "She *might* thereby *conceal* a certain token" (ME, 54).

17) "Hester Prynne *might have repaid* them" (ME, 59).

18) "She *may cover* it with a brooch" (ME, 53).

19) "Whatever sympathy she *might expect"* (ME, 65).

20) "She herself *might b*e the destined prophetess" (ME, 259).

21) "I *might endure* his agony as well as mine!" (ME, 69).

22) "She [...] *might* at any moment *become* a woman again" (ME, 160).

23) "She *might* [...], *have suffered* death" (ME, 161).

24) "She *might*, in one of her phases, *have been* a prophetess" (ME, 161).

25) "She *might picture* to herself as a more tolerable doom" (ME, 188).

26) "She *would become* the general symbol" (ME, 78).

27) "I *would have* thee *betake* thyself to play" (ME, 182).

28) "Madame Hester *would have winced* at that" (ME, 53).

29) "She *would need* the whole wide world to breathe in" (ME, 178).

30) "Her mother *could have fancied* that the child" (ME, 179).

31) "Before Hester Prynne *could* [...] *consider* what was practicable" (ME, 231).

32) "The home [...] was more dreary and desolate than even she *could bear"* (ME, 257).

33) "She *could* readily *infer* that" (ME, 155).

34) "She *could recognize* her wild, desperate, defiant mood" (ME, 90).

35) "Hester *ought* long ago *to have done* with this injustice" (ME, 172).

The syntactic features Hawthorne uses put his female protagonist in a position of command of her mind and body, yet this sense is undermined by hedges like uncertainty modals. Modality has been used with both verb categories: dynamic verbs x18 times, and stative verbs x17 in this narrative. In total, auxiliary modals occur 35 times to indicate past ability with "could" x11, past volition with "would" x8, vague possibility with "might" x14 and may x1, besides advisability with "ought to" x1. While the majority of modals expressed a past ability, which is basically irrelevant to the present, some uses express implied negation, or incomplete actions like "[...] more dreary and desolate than even she *could bear*" that suggest Hester's incapability of action. Another example is "Hester *ought* long ago *to have done* with this injustice", which suggests that the action has not been done yet, and has already affected Hester for a seven years period according to the author. Thirdly, "how she *could* ever *have been wrought* upon to marry him!" indicates the use of past ability modal "could" in the passive voice, which is already a passivity feature. In this example, Hester Prynne is perplexed about her marriage choices, and conjectures that her reasons were influenced by other factors or individuals, yet there is no expressed agent to confirm such a claim. Finally, there are also examples that equate would with want like: I *would have* thee *betake* thyself to play, and I *would speak* a word with you; they both manifest Hester's desires, hence an implied agency that is undermined by a past volition modal. It is interesting to note that some of the modified verbs are related to sufferance like endure, suffer, wince, and bear, which indicates that Hester's character is not even accorded agency on her plights. Similarly, when verbs like conceal, cover, and hide are used with uncertainty modals, they do not only show Hester's insecurities, but also deprecate her character in readers' minds because she seeks concealment rather than revelation.

### 2.3.6. Subjunctive Mood

Last of all, one of the significant passivity features is the subjunctive mood because it deals with hypothetical situations, hence nonexistent. Accordingly, Cannon declares: "central in the notional definition or description of the subjunctive mood is the idea of uncertainty or unreality" (Cannon 12). Such hypothetical attributions render this mood relevant in passive uncertain situations like cases in the following list:

1) "I [...] *would even have prayed* for it, *were it* fit that such as I should pray" (ME, 73).

2) "What a happiness *would it have been could* Hester Prynne *have heard* her clear [...] and have distinguished and unravelled her own darling's tones" (ME, 92).

3) "All the light and graceful foliage of her character [...] *might have been* repulsive *had she possessed* friends or companions" (ME, 159).

4) "Hopeless of retrieving her position, even *had* she not *scorned* to consider it" (ME, 160).

5) *"Were I* worthy to be quit of it, it *would fall away* of its own nature" (ME, 165).

6) *"Had she been* of a softer moral and intellectual fibre [*she*] *would have been* still more so" (ME, 86).

7) "She felt, at moments, *as if* she *must* needs *shriek out* [and must] *cast* herself from the scaffold" (ME, 59).

8) *"Had she* fallen among thieves, it *would have kept* her safe" (ME, 159).

9) "There *would have been* no scandal [...] *had* she *visited* him in his own study" (ME, 178).

10) "As *if* her heart *had been flung* into the street" (ME, 56).

11) *"Had they* taken her from me, I *would* willingly *have gone* with thee into the forest, and [*would have*] *signed* my name" (ME, 115).

12) "And now, rather than *have had* this grievous wrong to confess, she *would* gladly *have laid down*, and died there" (ME, 189).

13) *"Lest* she *should perpetrate* violence on herself"* (ME, 70).

Subjunctive mood was one of the syntactic choices that Kies explored in 1984 by George Orwell to study its impact on the character's agency. Similarly, this part shall inspect the use of this element to inspect the passivity of Hester. It may be worth mentioning that the most used conditional types in this list are second conditional (past simple + would + infinitive), and third conditional (past perfect + would+ have + past participle). Beginning with conditional type 2, it is practically manifest in 1 and 5; while conditional type 3 is shown in 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 11, and 12. One can notice that conditional cases in these sentences are inverted i.e., in the form of "were+ subject or had + subject", hence there is no apparent use of "if" because it is replaced with the inverted forms. Nevertheless, passages 7 and 10 show the use of if, but it is preceded with "as" that adds a comparative meaning. Finally, there is another subjunctive form in the 13th passage: "lest, should". This passage presents the unique combination of the modal "should" and a dynamic verb. However, the modal does not display its usual function of obligation and advisability, but rather the hypothetical function that is suggested by the subjunctive mood structure "lest, should". Thus, this passage suggests an undermined agency of Hester despite the dynamic verb "perpetrate". In a nutshell, the use of the subjunctive mood through *2nd and 3rd conditional types*, *if*, and *lest should* 13 times consolidates the implication of Hester's lack of force and agency because it portrays her as a character whose last resort is building imaginary nonexistent realities to confront her tragedy. In specific, the choice of conditionals that only include hypothetical past tenses might reinforce agency suppression because it is mostly used to lament past experiences and choices. In other words, instead of unshackling social constraints that demean her, the character of Hester seems occupied with tolerating and adapting to her imposed reality. In

fact, her silent treatment and refusal to depart from the town that repudiated her might be considered as a manifestation of her psychological power, yet syntactic choices constantly withhold this interpretation since it should be text-based only.

To conclude, the manual stylistic analysis results are displayed in the following table:

| Agency devices | Use | Recurrence | Passivity devices | Use | Recurrence |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Transitive dynamic verbs | 74 | 198 | Transitive stative verbs | 52 | 94 |
| Intransitive dynamic verbs | 30 | 44 | Intransitive stative verbs | 20 | 65 |
| Modals | 5 | 22 | Modals | 5 | 35 |
| | | | Negations | 15 | 60 |
| | | | Perfective aspect | 64 | 69 |
| | | | Passive Voice | 18 | 20 |
| | | | Subjunctive mood | 13 | 13 |

Fig. 1. The Use of Agency and Passivity Devices in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*

## 2.4. Conclusion

Nathaniel Hawthorne constructed his female character with various syntactic choices that hold distinct semantic interpretations. This chapter categorized these choices under two headings: agency and passivity to explore their roles in highlighting or suppressing the presence and power of Hester Prynne. To begin with, each category entailed a list of sub-categories to facilitate the process of analysis; consequently, devices like active/passive voice, dynamic/stative verbs, transitive/intransitive verbs, perfect aspect, subjunctive mood, and negation have been explored. The quantitative data obtained from this analysis demonstrates the frequent use of passive syntactic choices compared to agentive choice, and this confirms our hypothesis on silenced female characters under dogmatic communities. In fact, we can

notice that transitive dynamic verbs were remarkably used in comparison with transitive stative verbs; however, this notable recurrence is understated by intransitivity choices with both dynamic and stative verbs. Accordingly, Hester Prynne appeared unable to prompt any external effects or actions, and her actions and conditions were internalized processes. Similarly, uncertainty auxiliary modals occurred more than assertive modals, which inflicted a sense of hesitancy and irresoluteness on the character. Besides, while the agency has been depicted through dynamicity, transitivity, and modality, passivity has been presented through different additional features. These devices suppressed agency by creating hypothetical situations through the subjunctive mood, repudiating realities through negation, and eliminating agent by-phrases through the passive voice. To sum up, the manipulation of grammatical choices in this novel contributed to Hester Prynne's image as a passive hesitant character in the readers' minds. Consequently, we can conclude that Nathaniel Hawthorne might have wanted to portray females' lives in New England as silenced and deprived of their force. The events indicate that Hester Prynne has been imprisoned and publicly humiliated, which means she has already paid for her sin, yet the community seems unconvinced, or rather surprised, of her endurance and firmness in such circumstances. It is also noteworthy to state that the few times she appeared agentive and assertive those related to raising and protecting her daughter Pearl.

## Chapter 03: Female Agency and Passivity in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*

### 3.1. Introduction

The purpose of this last chapter is to provide an analysis of agency vs. passivity uses in *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Khaled Hosseini crafted a fictional characterization to depict true historical events that transformed almost three generations in Afghanistan. In particular, this chapter will be exclusively concerned with the life of the female protagonist Mariam during Taliban's rule. This limitation of context is due to the presence of three historical transformational periods of Afghanistan in the book; while this research is only concerned with one specific period. Therefore, similar to the preceding one, this chapter enfolds an endeavour to a quantitative and qualitative stylistic analysis of agency and passivity by Mariam. The author built the female character Mariam according to females' situation in three different historical periods in Afghanistan: the Soviet invasion, the Mujahideen control, and the Taliban rule. However, this analysis shall provide an overview of the female situation under the dogmatic ruling of Taliban exclusively where Mariam's character is linked to the presence of this religious faction. Specifically, Mariam's agency will be inspected through the extraction and analysis of agency devices like dynamicity, modality, and transitivity choices, while her passivity shall be deduced from different passive uses in grammar like stativity, modality, and transitivity choices. Besides the former devices, negation, the passive voice, the perfect aspect, subjunctive mood shall also be sampled and analyzed. This dichotomy of agency and passivity analysis is an attempt to ensure that syntactic choices adopted by authors -whether intentionally or not- can be considered as evidence for the characters' empowered or suppressed roles.

**3.2. Analysis of the Uses of Agency Devices**

A *Thousand Splendid Suns* includes a variety of textual, grammatical choices that demonstrate Mariam's agentive role like both transitive and intransitive dynamic verbs, as well as certainty assertive modals. To obtain a deeper understanding of their uses, the following titles shall address each one separately.

**3.2.1. Transitive Dynamic Verbs**

The use of transitive dynamic verbs in the active voice enables the female protagonist to display her agentive role and command of her life and decisions. Albeit the unsettled situation of Mariam during the Taliban occupation, there are considerable instances where this enduring passive character felt urged to resist social unfairness, and spousal abuse that were reinforced during the Taliban control. The following list entails samples that demonstrate her agency.

1) "She *watched* Laila's hand rise" (My emphasis, Hosseini 372).

2) "She *watched* the winds" (ME, 392)

3) "Mariam *watched* them [...] *watched* their shoeless feet" (ME, 387).

4) "She [...] *watched* the prison life in the courtyard" (ME, 392).

5) "Mariam *watched* his face relax" (ME, 369).

6) "She *watched* the folds clear" (ME, 369).

7) "She *hurled* herself against Him" (ME, 372).

8) "She *bit* them" (ME, 372).

9) "Mariam *wrote* it out, her name" (ME, 392).

10) "Mariam-*burrowed* their faces" (ME, 392).

11) "Mariam *shook* her head" (ME, 394).

12) "Mariam *shook* her head" (ME, 333).

13)    "Mariam *told* him the truth" (ME, 394).

14)    "She *kept* her eyes to the ground" (ME, 395).

15)     "Mariam *counted* five working cells" (ME, 386).

16)    "She *cupped* his face" (ME, 385).

17)     "Mariam *grabbed* the shovel" (ME, 373).

18)    "Mariam *steadied* her feet and *tightened* her grip" (ME, 373).

19)    "She *raised* it" (ME, 373).

20)    "Mariam *raised* the shovel high, *raised* it as high as she could" (ME, 374).

21)    "She *hit* him across the temple" (ME, 373).

22)    "She *turned* it (ME, 374).

23)    "She *gave* it everything she had" (ME, 374).

24)    "Mariam *arranged* damp cloths" (ME, 344).

25)    "Mariam *fished* the bedroom key" (ME, 377).

26)    "Mariam *grabbed* him under the arms" (ME, 377).

27)    "Mariam *washed* her hands, *ran* them through her hair, *took* a deep breath and *let* it

         out" (ME, 378).

28)    "Mariam *whipped* her head" (ME, 324).

29)    "Mariam *threw* herself on Laila" (ME, 326).

30)    "When Mariam *picked* her up" (ME, 327).

31)    "Few words from the Koran, which she *muttered* under her breath" (ME, 396).

32)    "Mariam *closed* her eyes" (ME, 331).

33)    "She *closed* her eyes" (ME, 396).

34)     "She *switched* the phone to her other ear, *closed* her eyes" (ME, 332).

35)    "Mariam *shifted* Aziza from one arm to the other" (ME, 305).

36)    "She *supported* Laila" (ME, 305).

37) "Mariam *helped* Laila sit" (ME, 306).

38) "She *swatted* it away" (ME, 307).

39) "She *fought* her way with impudent resolve" (ME, 307).

40) "Mariam *positioned* herself" (ME, 312).

41) "She [...] *tore* her gaze away" (ME, 329).

42) "Mariam *twiddled* a strand of Laila's hair" (ME, 384).

43) "Mariam *packed* Zalmai a small lunch [...] she *packed* some figs" (ME, 384).

44) "She *put* it all in a paper bag and *gave* it to Laila" (ME, 384).

45) Mariam *listened* to the scratchy ringing" (ME, 329).

46) "She *stroked* Laila's hair in her lap" (ME, 378).

47) "*I'm coming* with you" (ME, 343).

48) Mariam *planted* a kiss on his cheek" (ME, 385).

49) "Mariam *declined* her right to witnesses" (ME, 389).

50) "Mariam *pointed to* where Laila was sitting" (ME, 308).

51) "She *pointed to* a patch of soil" (ME, 313).

52) "Mariam *chose to* cradle her own suffering privately and quietly" (ME, 342).

53) "Mariam [...] and *left* the room" (ME, 373).

54) "She *was leaving* the world" (ME, 396).

55) "She *was leaving* it" (ME, 396).

56) "Mariam *was screaming* words" (ME, 371).

57) "Mariam *was wearing* a white scarf" (ME, 385).

58) "She *was deciding* the course of her own life" (ME, 374).

59) "She *was* [...] *calling* him" (ME, 330).

60) "A question of life and death I *am calling* about" (ME, 331).

61) "Mariam *brought down* the shovel this time" (ME, 374).

62) "She *ran down* the hallway [...] *crossed* the yard" (ME, 373).

63) "She *dug in* her heels" (ME, 307).

64) "She *beat at* his chest" (ME, 372).

65) "Mariam *looked* down *at* her hands" (ME, 392).

66) "Mariam *put on* her burqa" (ME, 328).

67) "She *circled around* the incoherent tangle" (ME, 371).

68) "*I've killed* our husband. *I've deprived* your son of his father" (ME, 383).

69) "I'll get you seen, Laila jo. I *promise*" (ME, 306).

70) "Mariam *gave* her a soft look" (ME, 385).

71) "She *pictured* Jalil smiling" (ME, 332).

72) "Mariam *cleared* her throat" (ME, 331).

73) "Mariam's soft maternal voice [...] *brought* a degree of comfort to her" (ME, 379).

These samples are from chapter 37 to the end of part three because the events cover the period of Taliban's rule. It is noticeable that the use of transitive dynamic verbs is relatively evident, and it includes phrasal verbs' use as well. Firstly, this section of the narrative shows the use of 4 reporting verbs 60 times as follows: to say x54, to ask x3, to call x1, and to cry x2. While the list above illustrates that approximately 67 active transitive dynamic verbs were used 84 times, this means 71 verbs that occur 144 times in total. These verbs come under forms of phrasal verbs like brought down, put on, looked at, and dug in; and prepositional verbs like ran down, beat at, circled around, and calling about. The objects for these categories occur after the adverbs or prepositions; whereas some verbs are followed by infinitive phrases that function as objects like pointed to, and chose to. However, one can also notice that synecdoche is employed in the last passage. Although it is not one of the devices that are studied in this research, it can still affect the agentive function of dynamic verbs. Concerning the course of events, this sampled part depicts a significant climax in the

narrative because Mariam finally opts for immediate action instead of silent witness. After her endurance of spousal abuse after a forced marriage at the age of 15, and her forbearance of social injustice due to her illegitimate birth, Mariam chooses to control her own fate and end her misery.

In particular, the verbs used to depict the agency of Mariam when she protects Laila from their husband's violence, when she decides to kill him, and when she looks after Laila's children. In fact, her shift from passivity to agency is not to secure a better life for herself, but rather for Laila and her children. She is a selfless protagonist who scarifices her life for the wellbeing of others; thus she kills their abusive husband, admits her crime, and receives her death sentence. Hence, Mariam has been subjected to the rejection of her father, loss of her mother, abuse of her husband, and her unsuccessful pregnancies, but she becomes urged to rescue Laila and her children from suffering the same fate. It is worth noting that before her dreadful action, Mariam and Laila had a failed escape both their home and town but Taliban's scattered men did not tolerate such sinful intentions. To present the position of Taliban's police on domestic matters, we shall present this quote: "'what about the law, *then,* Officer Rahman?' Tears of rage stung her eyes. 'Will you be there to maintain order?' 'As a matter of policy, we do not interfere with private family matters, *hamshira*'" (Hosseini 284). All in all, the abusive husband Rasheed gained the privilege of manhood under Taliban, which makes them an accomplice in their injustices against women in particular. The author used the past tense mostly, the past continuous x7, the present perfect x2, and the present continuous x1. To sum up, this syntactic choice served to portray the agentive side of Mariam, where she decides for herself.

### 3.2.2. Intransitive Dynamic Verbs

While the preceding list includes transitive dynamic verbs, which further consolidates the character's agency, the following list shall present dynamic verbs used intransitively. Although intransitivity is considered a passivity feature, dynamic verbs still hold their agentive function.

1) "When she *did* [turn it]" (ME, 352).

2) "I admit to what I *did*, brother" (ME, 390).

3) "The man behind her asked her to stop. Mariam *did* [stop]" (ME, 396).

4) "As she *did* [turned it]" (ME, 374).

5) "Mariam *did* [kneel] as she was told" (ME, 397).

6) "She *struggled* to uncurl his fingers" (ME, 372).

7) "She *moved* to the edge of the balcony" (ME, 332).

8) "Mariam *waited* outside the room" (ME, 353).

9) "Mariam *awoke* on the morning" (ME, 292).

10) "She *ran* to the living room" (ME, 292).

11) "Mariam *was napping* with Aziza in her room" (ME, 303).

12) "A woman nearby hissed, Mariam *hissed* back" (ME, 307).

13) "She *went to* stop him, but he shoved her back" (ME, 370).

14) "Mariam *waited* patiently" (ME, 378).

15) "Mariam's soft maternal voice *went on*" (ME, 379).

16) "Mariam *got up*" (ME, 379).

17) "Before Mariam's eyes whenever she *got up*" (ME, 327).

18) "Mariam *waded in* [...] and *burrowed* against the elbows" (ME, 307).

19) "He pulled back but she *held on*" (ME, 385).

20) "Mariam *backed away*" (ME, 373).

21)     "She *burst through* the front door" (ME, 373).

22)     "She *hunkered down* to eye level with Zalmai" (ME, 385).

23)     "Mariam *clawed at* necks" (ME, 307).

24)     "Mariam *clawed at* him" (ME, 372).

25)     "Mariam's face [...] *hovered over* Laila" (ME, 376).

26)     "Mariam *waved* amiably" (ME, 385).

27)     "Mariam *cried* a little" (ME, 394).

28)     "Mariam's stride *steadied*" (ME, 395).

29)     "Mariam *bounced* in the bed" (ME, 394).

30)     "Mariam *swung*" (ME, 373).

31)     "She *relented:* "You die young, and I get to live to a ripe old age"" (ME, 323).

32)     "She *walked* the final twenty paces" (ME, 395).

33)     "Mariam *played* in cool, tangled grass" (ME, 393).Intransitive

34)     "Someone elbowed her in the ribs, and she *elbowed* back" (ME, 307). Intransitive

        This list consists of 30 dynamic verbs that were used intransitively 34 times, which

indicate physical activities. Mostly, these verbs have Mariam as a human agent, but they also

include parts of her body, or senses like voice, face, and stride in certain passages. Their

effect diminished compared to transitive verbs because actions here have no external agentive

role, and they merely depict Mariam's activities. Such activities include verbs, which show

her insistence to overcome struggles, like struggle, held on, waded in, and burst through.

However, other verbs like bounced, swung, steadied, waved, moved, and hunkered down have

demonstrated physical activities that not only lack objects, but they also have no effect on

Mariam because they only serve to describe the character's actions. It can be said that these

verbs reveal an active side of the female protagonist, yet despite their dynamicity, they mostly

carry a latent passive meaning. For example, verbs like backed away, cry, wait, and listen

function as dynamic verbs, but propound a sense of passivity because the subject either had an emotional breakdown (cry), or had to submit to the will of the second party (wait, or listen). Next, the first five passages include the use of the auxiliary verb "to do" that functions as a verbal substitution to avoid repetition. Respectively, the verbs after to do in square brackets are the substituted verbs according to context. That is to say, as a helping verb, to do is usually used with other verbs to be meaningful, and in this case they are included to help us identify their verb category.

To conclude, the author utilized a variety of syntactic choices to build his female protagonist where a total number of 101 dynamic verbs used transitively and intransitively up to 178 times. The narrative built around the character of Mariam with these choices contributed to create an agentive active character in command of her decisions and activities.

### 3.2.3. Modality

Modality choices are also a significant feature to manifest the character's assertiveness or uncertainty, hence agency or passivity. Concerning the agentive auxiliary modals, this part shall list certainty and affirmation modals such as had to, should and will.

1) "She *had t*o stop, wait for it to pass" (ME, 328).

2) "Mariam *had to* stand over her" (ME, 377).

3) "I just *have to* find it" (ME, 378).

4) "I*'ll* get you seen" (ME, 306).

5) "You write it down and I'*ll* get it" (ME, 310).

6) "No, it was not so bad, Mariam thought, that she *should* die this way" (ME, 396).

The use of assertive modals throughout the entire novel does not exceed 25 times compared to the exhaustive list of uncertainty modals. Concerning this short list of samples, the modal had to, which is the past form of both must and have to, is used 3 times to add an

emphasis and a sense of obligation on the agency of Mariam. Quirk et al stress that the performer's agency and command is implicated in his use of this obligation modal (342). Accordingly, it is noticeable that Mariam has authority in the above passages. Next, the author used will two times to depict Mariam's strong volition to act upon her words. If we refer to their context, Mariam is addressing Laila both times, and she has control over the situation, which is Laila's high-risk labour and childbirth situation. Finally, the author used the modal should as a putative should instead of commanding should. According to Quirk et al, this use is valid in emotional statement and contexts where expressions like "such as so, such, like this, like that, ever, or at all" can occur, hence "this way" in the sample above (670). To conclude, all the modals except should in this list are assertive, yet this is barely a considerable use of assertive modals to reinforce the character's firm authority and agency. In regards to the overall use of agency devices in the novel, it is noticeable that Khaled Hosseini's syntactic choices are limited in terms of enabling his female protagonist to be actively engaged. Even after the analysis of the whole narrative built around Mariam, we could recognize that her agency was only mightily present in passages of monotonous house chores for example: "Mariam cleaned lentils and moistened rice. She sliced eggplants for *borani,* and cooked leeks and ground beef for *aushak.* She swept the floor, beat the curtains, aired the house [...]. She arranged mattresses" (Hosseini 94). Therefore, the author limited the role of Mariam to domestic affairs, which grows to be unappreciated as the events proceed.

### 3.3.   Analysis of the Uses of Passivity Devices

The following samples will be analyzed according to the same passivity devices in the previous chapter, which are cases of: stativity, transitivity, modality, negativity, passivity, as well as the perfective and subjunctive forms. Similarly to the previous part, the sampled

passages are extracted from the 37th chapter until the end of part three i.e., the part concerning Taliban's rule starting from 1996.

### 3.3.1. Stative Verbs

The following lists enfold the use of stative verbs transitively and intransitively in the novel; such categorization should facilitate the analysis process.

### 3.3.1.1.Transitive Stative Verbs

In order to describe and lay before readers the state of characters, authors employ stative verbs whether transitively, or intransitively. Likewise, Khaled Hosseini put into use an exhaustive list of stative verbs that shall be comprised in the following list:

1) "Mariam *saw* now in those same eyes" (ME, 372).

2) "Mariam *saw* Laila behind him" (ME, 372).

3) "Mariam *saw* that he meant to carry this through" (ME, 373).

4) "Mariam *saw* two men sitting" (ME, 329).

5) "She *saw* Jalil waving to her" (ME, 333).

6) "Mariam *saw* a bedsheet" (ME, 294).

7) "Mariam *saw* her first of the Taliban" (ME, 295).

8) "Mariam *saw* people craning their necks" (ME, 295).

9) "Mariam *saw* now the sacrifices a mother made" (ME, 307).

10) "Mariam *saw* an aluminium table" (ME, 309).

11) "Mariam *saw* that she *had* a crest of silvery hair" (ME, 311).

12) "Mariam *saw* the doctor's shadow move" (ME, 312).

13) "Mariam *saw* alarm" (ME, 369).

14) "Mariam *saw* his feet pounding the steps" (ME, 370).

15) "She *saw* him pocketing the key, *saw* his belt" (ME, 370).

16) "She *saw* fingers clawing at Rasheed's face" (ME, 371).

17) "Mariam *saw* that she was no longer struggling" (ME, 373).

18) "In Rasheed's eyes she *saw* murder for them both" (ME, 374).

19) "She *saw* his shadow arms lift his shadow Kalashnikov" (ME, 396).

20) "She *saw* an old woman" (ME, 294).

21) "Was that respect she *saw* in his eyes?" (ME, 374).

22) "She *thought* she *saw* his face soften" (ME, 373).

23) "She *thought* of Aziza" (ME, 329).

24) "She *thought* now of the letter" (ME, 330).

25) "Mariam *thought* he had hung up" (ME, 332).

26) "She *thought* ruefully of Nana" (ME, 307).

27) "Here was a woman, she *thought*" (ME, 312).

28) "Mariam *thought* there was something" (ME, 328).

29) "He's going to kill her, she *thought*" (ME, 373).

30) "Maybe he saw something in her face too, Mariam *thought*" (ME, 374).

31) "She *thought* of her entry into this world" (ME, 396).

32) "It was not so bad, Mariam *thought*" (ME, 396).

33) "She *thought* of Zalmai" (ME, 395).

34) "Mariam *remembered* the first time" (ME, 371).

35) "He was thinner, much thinner, than she *remembered*" (ME, 330).

36) "Mariam *Remembered* Najibullah's plump" (ME, 295).

37) "She *remembered* something Mullah Faizullah used to say" (ME, 327).

38) "Mariam *remembered* now, [...] *remembered* him sitting downstairs" (ME, 353).

39) "Mariam *remembered* the dim glimmer of cold stars" (ME, 388).

40) "Mariam *remembered* it from her childhood, *remembered* Jalil singing it" (ME, 393).

41) "Mariam *spent* ten days in prison" (ME, 392).

42) "Mariam *spent* the rest of the day" (ME, 393).

43) "She *realized* why the doorman at the Continental had looked familiar" (ME, 353).

44) "How long before she *realized* [...] that the fingers were hers" (ME, 371).

45) "She *dreamed* of pebbles" (ME, 393).

46) "She *dreamed* of Nana" (ME, 393).

47) "Mariam *knew* that she and Laila had become one" (ME, 293).

48) "I *know* you have important things to tend to, but it is life and death" (ME, 331).

49) "I *know* him" (ME, 295).

50) "I *know* what to do" (ME, 327).

51) "Mariam *knew* then the futility [...] of not finishing this" (ME, 374).

52) "Mariam *knew* that life for the most part had been unkind to her" (ME, 395).

53) "Her hair [...] *had* a few stripes of gray in it" (ME, 314).

54) "It's all I *have* to give her" (ME, 318).

55) "Mariam *had* a view of the Polytechnic Institute" (ME, 328).

56) "Mariam *had* disjointed dreams that last night" (ME, 393).

57) "Then she *had* Laila lie Down" (ME, 378).

58) "Mariam *had* the sense" (ME, 293).

59) "Mariam *had* her doubts" (ME, 326).

60) "I *have* this phone for five minutes only" (ME, 332).

61) "They're the only true possession I'*ve* ever *had*" (ME, 318).

62) "She *imagined* that something had passed between them" (ME, 373).

63) "Mariam *imagined* heads shaking" (ME, 395).

64) "Mariam *heard* bits of their chatter" (ME, 329).

65)   "She *heard* Pashto and Farsi" (ME, 329).

66)   "Mariam *heard* of a neighbourhood widow" (ME, 327).

67)   "Mariam *heard* the answer in his laugh" (ME, 299).

68)   "Mariam *found* one in the yard" (ME, 296).

69)   "She *found* herself face-to-face with a Nurse" (ME, 307).

70)   "Mariam *found* people" (ME, 294).

71)   "She [...] *found* Laila already at the window" (ME, 292).

72)   "Mariam *concentrated* on these things" (ME, 328).

73)   "She *mourned* that she would never see Aziza grow up" (ME, 396).

74)   "She *feared* she might lose her nerve" (ME, 328).

75)    "She *wanted* him to see" (ME, 373).

76)   "Mariam *noticed* it first" (ME, 348).

77)   "Mariam *wished* for so much in those final moments" (ME, 396).

78)   "I *admit* to what I did, brother" (ME, 390).

79)   "Mariam *wondered* if he would be the one" (ME, 394).

80)   "I *meant* it for you, Laila jo" (ME, 382).

81)    "Mariam *gained* some notoriety among them" (ME, 388).

82)   "Mariam *understood* that this was a woman far past outrage" (ME, 312).

83)   "I *wonder* what they've done to my father's cinema" (ME, 301).

84)    "She *smelled* a baby's milky burp" (ME, 308).

85)   "Mariam *lost* count of how many times the belt cracked" (ME, 371).

In total, this list contains 25 transitive stative verbs occurring 90 times that create a comprehensive description of Mariam's state. There is a variety of verbs included, namely, verbs of perception like see, hear, notice, and smell; verbs of cognition like think, remember, know, realize, understand, imagine, picture, and concentrate; verbs of possession like have

and want; in addition to verbs of emotions like fear, mourn, and wish. After a contextual inspection of these passages and their verbs, we can recognize that their stative condition have not completely diminished the implied sense of agency. For instance, whenever Mariam sees, remembers, thinks, or knows something, she appears inertly active because such states are not typically active, but rather require a certain mental effort. However, they do not affect any externalized objects or imply any sense of command; hence, they remain exclusively mental and passive. We notice that Mariam's character is significantly emotional; for example, remembering, mourning, and thinking are states that display her feelings of nostalgia and longing for her parents, or her new family represented in Laila and her children. Thus, these samples imply the climax of the novel, which is the act of final refusal to endure Rasheed's violence, even if it meant sacrificing one's life for it. Accordingly, we follow the narrative of Mariam who does not venture into murder until she decides it is the only left solution in those moments of rush. Before that, she went through a series of observation, endurance, and patience situations, which are mentioned in this transitive stative verbs list

### 3.3.1.2.Intransitive Stative Verbs

While the previous list consisted of transitive stative verbs, the following shall inspect the same verb category when used intransitively. The use of intransitive stative verbs consolidates the character's lack of authority over her life as we shall notice subsequently.

1)   "She *did* [understand]" (ME, 392).

2)   "I *do* [admit]" (ME, 389).

3)    "The way she *did* [sit]" (ME, 377).

4)   "She just *sat* there" (ME, 377).

5)   "She *sat* by the window of the cell" (ME, 392).

6)   "Mariam *sat* near Rasheed" (ME, 377).

7) "Mariam *was sitting* in a corner" (ME, 381).

8) "Her mind *wandered*" (ME, 330).

9) "Her head *spun*, and her ears *rang*" (ME, 327).

10) "Mariam *smiled* wanly" (ME, 382).

11) "Her lips *trembled*" (ME, 383).

12) "Mariam's stomach *fell*" (ME, 332).

The overall number of intransitive stative verbs is 8 verbs that occur 13 times. The first three cases are sentences with the auxiliary verb "to do", which functions as a verbal substitution to avoid the repetition of previously mentioned verbs. Thus, the substituted verbs are put between square brackets to identify the reason they are considered intransitive stative. Next, the author put into use stance verbs like sit; besides, textual evidence shows the use of synecdoche as another passivity device; body parts of Mariam like head, lips, ears, mind, and stomach are accorded the agentive role on behalf of her whole body. Such syntactic choices drastically undermine the authoritative presence of Mariam, and engender a passive image of the female protagonist who lacks basic self-control.

### 3.3.1.2.1. Linking Verbs

Linking verbs are also considered intransitive stative verbs because, instead of objects, they take predicates. The following list entails the linking verbs that were used in the third part of the novel starting from chapter 37.

1) "Yes. I'*m* very afraid" (ME, 394).

2) "I *am* so sorry, Zalmai Jo" (ME, 385).

3) "I'm sorry" (ME, 285).

4) "I'*m* sorry to have bothered you" (ME, 333).

5) "Mariam's voice *was* low" (ME, 383).

6) "Mariam *was* exhausted" (ME, 328).

7) "When she *was* absorbed in thought" (ME, 377).

8) "She *was* aware of a thumping Sound" (ME, 373).

9) "Mariam's final thoughts *were* a few words from the Koran" (ME, 396).

10) "Mariam *was* forty now" (ME, 314).

11) "When she *was* done speaking [...] her mouth *felt* parched" (ME, 239).

12) "What a fool she *had been*" (ME, 372).

13) "*Had* she *been* a deceitful wife?" (ME, 372).

14) "She *had been* afraid" (ME, 395).

15) "Until Laila *felt* better" (ME, 378).

16) "When she did *feel* herself faltering" (ME, 395).

17) "Mariam [...] *became* a kind of celebrity" (ME, 388).

18) "Mariam's face *looked* thin" (ME, 377).

There are 4 linking verbs that appear 19 times in this list. Copula verbs such as to be (am, was, were, had been), feel, become, and look "link between the complement and the subject" (Quirk et al 667). Complements consist of 5 predicate nominatives and 14 predicate adjectives in this list. Consequently, the author utilized a total of 12 intransitive stative verbs that occurred 32 times, which helped deliver the character's emotions, thoughts and states to readers.

### 3.3.2. Negation

Contrary to affirmative statements that propound positive meanings, negative ones function counteractively. As a stylistic syntactic device, it serves a device to suppress agency, and emphasize passivity.

1) "I *don't* understand" (ME, 310).

2) "She *didn't* know who else to call" (ME, 331).

3) "Mariam *didn't* say anything for a long time" (ME, 377).

4) "She *did not* appear agitated" (ME, 377).

5) "Mariam's legs did *not* buckle" (ME, 395).

6) "Her arms did *not* flail" (ME, 395).

7) "She did *not* have to be dragged" (ME, 395).

8) "She did *not* look up to see" (ME, 395).

9) "I am *not* smart like you [...], I *didn't* know the answers" (ME, 285).

10) "I do *not* [have witnesses]" (ME, 390).

11) "Khala Mariam *won't* be with me" (ME, 337).

12) "I *won't* let them" (ME, 327).

13) "I *won't* have the two of you living on the run, like fugitives" (ME, 383).

14) "Mariam said she *hadn't*" (ME, 339).

15) "She had *no* authority to exert" (ME, 352).

16) "Mariam could *not*, would *not*, allow that to happen" (ME, 373).

17) "She *couldn't*" (ME, 332).

18) "She would *not* watch him take Laila too" (ME, 373).

19) "She paid it *no* attention" (ME, 377).

20) "It isn't right that I run. I *can't*" (ME, 383).

21) "There's *nothing* more I want" (ME, 384).

22) "Mariam had *no* visitors" (ME, 387).

23) "She could *not* help but wish for more of it" (ME, 395).

24) "She would *never* see Aziza grow up, [...] would *not* get to paint her hands with henna" (ME, 396).

25) "She would *never* play with Aziza's children" (ME, 396).

26) "I'll *never* escape your son's grief? How do I look at him? How do I ever bring myself to look at him, Laila jo?" (ME, 383).

27) "She was *no* longer struggling" (ME, 373).

The author employed two types of lexical negation devices: negation words like not x11, no x4, and nothing x1; in addition to auxiliary negations like won't x3, would not x3, could not x3, would never x3, will never x1,and can't x1. In total, these negative forms appear 30 times to present Mariam's series of unattained events, and actions. One can identify that there are multiple cases of negation use based on context; for instance, volition modal would is detached from its function with the radical negative word "never". Apart from the use of won't twice to manifest Mariam's agency through refusal, the remaining passages continued to cement the lack of her control. Self-deprecation is also introduced through negatives like the 9th sentence, besides statements of incapability, and powerlessness like 16th, 17th, and 20th passages. Thus, Mariam is not only deprived of her power to control her actions, yet she has also submitted to her fate without a significant struggle. Cognitive processes such as understanding, knowing, and paying attention are negated, which reinforces Mariam's passive character. On the whole, it is important to note that the author has utilized negation up to 170 times in the inclusive narration of Mariam, yet it only occurs 30 times in this limited part.

### 3.3.3. Perfect Aspect

Past tenses such as the past perfect are employed to dismantle their effects, and indicate that verbs in this tense are invalid in the present time. Thus, since they are not pertinent in the current situation, such past perfect verbs serve to detach agency from the subjects, and reinforce the passivity sense.

1) "Mariam *had* first *heard* of the Taliban two years before" (ME, 292).

2) "Mariam *had heard* the announcement" (ME, 305).

3) "Mariam *had chosen* Jalil over her" (ME, 307).

4) "She'*d lost* two front teeth" (ME, 314).

5) "She'*d* accidentally *dropped* Zalmai" (ME, 314).

6) "Her skin *had coarsened*, *tanned* from [...] sitting beneath the brazen sun" (ME, 314).

7) "Mariam *had started* teaching Aziza" (ME, 318).

8) "The last time she'*d seen* Jalil" (ME, 330).

9) "The first time she *had seen* his eyes" (ME, 371).

10) "She *had seen* men inflict on one another" (ME, 331).

11) "She *had* once *called* his name" (ME, 330).

12) "Mariam *had parted* the curtain [...] and [*had*] *caught* a glimpse of him" (ME, 330).

13) "Mariam *had* quickly *closed* the curtains" (ME, 330).

14) "She *had sat* on the bed, *waited* for him to leave" (ME, 330).

15) "She *had kept* it for days" (ME, 330).

16) "She *had shredded* it unopened" (ME, 330).

17) "She'*d reached* the mayor's office in Herat" (ME, 331).

18) "She'*d considered* the possibility, of course" (ME, 332).

19) "She *had* quite literally *knocked* some understanding into his head" (ME, 374).

20) "Everything I'*d* ever *wished* for as a little girl you've already given me" (ME, 384).

21) "Mariam *had learned* that many of the children had been born" (ME, 387).

22) "She *had asked* the Talib officials here" (ME, 387).

23) "Mariam's trial *had taken* place the week before" (ME, 389).

24) "She *had taken* the love of his life" (ME, 395).

25) "The last time she'*d signed* her name to a document" (ME, 392).

26) "She *had feared*" (ME, 395).

27) "A woman who *had loved* and been loved back" (ME, 396).

28) "What harmful thing *had* she willfully *done* to this man?" (ME, 372).

29) "*Had* she not *looked* after him when he was ill?" (ME, 372).

30) "*Had* she not *given* this man her youth?" (ME, 372).

31) "*Had* she ever justly *deserved* his meanness?" (ME, 372).

The course of narration in this part portrays Mariam's actions as completed, and cannot be controlled anymore. In particular, both verb categories are used perfectively where 18 dynamic verbs appear 19 times, and 12 stative verbs appear 15 times. Being conjugated in the past perfect, these verbs lost their affirmative, authoritative tone because the tense undermines the dynamicity of dynamic verbs, and consolidates the passivity of stative verbs. In addition to the tense, the last four passages, unlike the previous declarative ones, are interrogative passages. They are not direct questions, but rather rhetorical because Mariam is questioning the worth of her sacrifices for her husband, and the reason he became malignant and cruel after she undergoes successive miscarriages. It seems that Mariam's worth as a wife and a life partner does not exceed child birth, which she fails to do, hence she fails to claim her worth too. The context of these rhetorical questions is the scene where Mariam's thoughts are retrieving every memory of injustice from her husband before finally committing her crime. On the whole, the author used a total of 30 verbs in the past perfect that occur 34 times, and such syntactic choices suppressed the authoritative character of Mariam.

### 3.3.4. Passive Voice

The analysis of the complete novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* shows that the active voice is mostly used, yet the passive voice could still be identified.

1) "Mariam *was* being *dragged* back" (ME, 308).

2) "Mariam *was given* a document, [*was*] *told* to sign" (ME, 392).

3) "One last time, Mariam did as she *was told*" (ME, 397).

4) "Mariam *was helped* down from the truck" (ME, 395).

5) "She *was made* to descend from the truck" (ME, 395).

6) "A woman who *had* [...] *been loved* back" (ME, 396).

7) "Her view of the nurse *was blocked* now by shoulders" (ME, 308).

8) "She *was struck* by bouts of dizziness" (ME, 328).

It is important to state that the narration of Mariam's character included 26 passive statements approximately, and 9 of them are present in the concerned part. The passive voice mainly refers to a syntactic form that impacts the subject beyond his/her/its control, or intervention. These last passages are the only cases that have agent by-phrases, while the rest remains without expressed agents. Hence, Mariam is deprived of any grammatical agentive device to exert her power, or recover her self-control. With regards to the passivized tenses, the passive form of past simple is used 8 times after considering the only case of ellipsis in the third passage. However, there is only one case of passive past perfect that is the 6th sample. Similarly, passivized verbs consist of 7 dynamic verbs, and 1 stative verb (loved); one can realize that passive dynamic verbs not only detach Mariam from action, but also impose actions on her as if she is being dictated her life instructions. Namely, verbs like told, made, and dragged seem to put her under direct obligations. In fact, the 3rd passage "one last time, she did as she was told" reveals that it is not her first time receiving commands, and acting upon them; therefore, her passive character becomes more highlighted.

### 3.3.5. Modality

Modal auxiliaries are one of the linguistic entities used to hedge meanings of assertive statements both in fiction and nonfiction works. Such is the case with *A Thousand Splendid Suns* where their use implies that the author chose to lessen the assertive tone of Mariam. The list below is a compilation of passive auxiliary modals found in the third part of the novel.

1) "She *would* later hear that the Taliban had dragged Najibullah" (ME, 295).

2) "Mariam *would* always admire Laila" (ME, 312).

3) "Mariam *would* tell her what needed to be done" (ME, 379).

4) "She had been afraid that she *would* make a fool of herself (ME, 395).

5) "That she *would* turn into a pleading, weeping spectacle" (ME, 395).

6) "She *would* be betrayed by animal instinct or bodily disgrace" (ME, 395).

7) "She *would have liked* that very much, to be old and play with Aziza's children" (ME, 396).

8) "Mariam *could* sense the crowd" (ME, 395).

9) "Mariam *could* see the children playing a blindfolded game" (ME, 393).

10) "She *could* hear footsteps" (ME, 332).

11) "She *could* see the hotel's once-famous swimming pool" (ME, 332).

12) "All she *could* see of Tariq were his long legs" (ME, 353).

13) "She *could* see the bread factory" (ME, 328).

14) "She *could* make out the hollow ruins of Darulaman Palace" (ME, 328).

15) "She *could* feel her hip bone" (ME, 327).

16) "She *could* feel Laila's teeth rattling" (ME, 312).

17) "She *might* lose her nerve if she let her mind wander" (ME, 328).

18) "She *might* scream or vomit or even wet herself" (ME, 395).

19) "Mariam was *going to* explain, [...] but Zalmai cut her off" (ME, 352).

It might be useful to note that the total use of passive modals (could, would, and might) in the novel is approximately 980 times. However, since the analysis concerns a specific part from the novel, the author utilized 4 auxiliary modals in their past forms as follows: could x9, would x7, might x2, and going to x1. One can recognize that most main verbs in the list are stative verbs, which might induce in the readers' minds that Mariam is not

accorded clear assertive statements, even if they are statements of emotions, or feelings. To illustrate, the 9 uses of "could" are associated with perception, and emotional verbs like see, feel, hear, and sense; hence, the modal here expresses Mariam's past ability. Next, one can distinguish two functions of the modal "would" in the list; one is weak past volition in the first three passages, and the other is hypothetical meanings in the succeeding four passages. For instance, the 7th sampled passage consists of "would" in the form of past modals: would +have+ past participle. Short and Mick call it an aspectual auxiliary that suggest "future expectations and hypothetical suppositions" (83). Hence, besides the hedging effect this modal had introduced, it is also used to present unreal situations that Mariam imagined. Next in line is the past form of "may" might, which indicates past possibilities. Contextually speaking, the use of might in these passages reinforces the hesitant character of Mariam the minute her execution time arrives. Her mind started to function negatively, and to expect the worst scenario that could happen to her when she descends that scaffold. Finally, the auxiliary modal "going to" is usually used to highlight agency, yet Hosseini in this passage used it in the past tense, and suppressed the agentive function it was about to introduce by the conjunction "but". Accordingly, Mariam sounds unable to exert her power even with a child "Zalmai". All in all, the 4 modals occur 18 times in this part, where they minimized Mariam's control and command.

### 3.3.6. Subjunctive Mood

Hypothetical situations are derived from future predictions one makes, which means that they remain unfulfilled. When used by fiction authors, the subjunctive mood lessens the decisiveness of their characters, and consolidates their lack of authority on their life events. The following list shall include the subjunctive sentences utilized in *A Thousand Splendid Suns*:

1) "Mariam *wished* she had been a better daughter to Nana" (ME, 307).

2) "She *wished* she'd understood then what she understood now about motherhood" (ME, 307).

3) "She *wished* now that she had let him in" (ME, 330).

4) "She *wished* she hadn't destroyed his letter" (ME, 331).

5) "She *wished* she could see Laila again, wished to hear [...] her laugh" (ME, 395).

6) "*If* she *let* him walk now, how long before he fetched the key from his pocket and went for that gun" (ME, 374).

7) "But, *if* I *hadn't*, he would have killed her. He was strangling her" (ME, 390).

8) "*Had* Mariam *been* certain that he would be satisfied with shooting only her [...], she might *have dropped* the shovel" (ME, 374).

The complete novel contains 15 uses of the subjunctive mood where 8 of them are found in the section that is concerned with this analysis. One can distinguish three forms of the subjunctive as follows: the expression of "wish" x5, conditional "if" x2, and 1 case of conditional type 3 in the last sentence. The verb "wish" is usually employed to express a desire, but, in this context, it was used five times to express regret. In fact, Mariam feels responsible for the suicide of her mother, and the sadness of her father whom she refused to meet before he died. Hence, her sorrowing over the death of her loved ones, and over the separation with Laila and her children resulted into regrets over the past irreparable times. Next, the use of conditional "if" is related to her killing of her husband where she predicted his upcoming actions if she does not execute her plan immediately. The last subjunctive form is the inverted conditional type three where Mariam introduces an unreal case to justify her deed. It might indicate her incapability to resolve to any other solution in such a critical time except murder because she wanted to protect Laila at all costs, especially that she is certain that Rasheed will kill both of them if she discontinues her action.

To conclude, the manual stylistic analysis results are displayed in the table below:

| Agency devices | Use | Recurrence | Passivity devices | Use | Recurrence |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Transitive dynamic verbs | 71 | 144 | Transitive stative verbs | 25 | 90 |
| Intransitive dynamic verbs | 30 | 34 | Intransitive stative verbs | 12 | 32 |
| Modals | 3 | 6 | Modals | 4 | 18 |
| | | | Negations | 9 | 30 |
| | | | Perfective aspect | 30 | 34 |
| | | | Passive Voice | 9 | 9 |
| | | | Subjunctive mood | 3 | 8 |

Fig. 2. The Use of Agency and Passivity Devices in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*

### 3.4. Conclusion

Literary narratives can encompass a significant textual linguistic material for critics and stylisticians to explore. If they restrict themselves to syntactic studies, they can obtain rudimentary results in the end. In this chapter, devices that highlight agency like transitive dynamic verb, intransitive dynamic verbs, and assertive modality were studied; along with devices that suppress agency like transitive stative verbs, intransitive stative verbs, modality, negation, passive voice, perfective, and subjunctive aspects. Khaled Hosseini composed a narrative rich with the history of Afghanistan starting from the Soviet invasion until the American involvement after the 11/09 terrorist attacks in 2001. In its core, the account contained the life courses of two females that were raised in two distinct circumstances, and followed paths that would intersect at a certain point. In particular, this chapter was only concerned with the third part of the novel because it covers the Taliban rule in the 19th

century. In addition, the sampled passages included the narration that involved the female protagonist Mariam solely. This might be due to the syntactic choices made by the author that either illuminate or inhibit her potency and authority. In fact, the quantitative and qualitative analyses of the sampled passages reveal that her passivity has been cemented through various grammatical devices. As for her agency, it can be said that it has been displayed exclusively in two cases; one is her routine with house chores throughout the entire novel, while the other case is the maternal instinct that she has developed towards Laila. The latter is the driving reason for the shift of Mariam from passive to agentive character because she only decided to venture when Laila was having a troubled childbirth, and when she was physically abused by their husband (hers and Laila's). If her psychological state is taken into consideration, one can assume that her psychological passivity as well because she blamed herself for others' cruel actions with her, and disregarded her self-worth. The dogmatic political rule that was established by Taliban's faction has consolidated the unbearable life situations of women that were firstly initiated by the previous occupants, Mujahideen, in the name of Islam and Islamic Sharia laws. All in all, Mariam's journey ended as a woman who chose to sacrifice, and pay for her crime with her life after spending the big part of it as a submissive female due to her troubled unsupported childhood and adulthood. Thus, the author could demonstrate a part of Afghan women's suffering in patriarchal dogmatic societies, even if it is through a fictional character.

**General Conclusion**

This study was undertaken to investigate women's situation in two dogmatic religious communities that have different time and place settings; one is 17th century Puritan Salem, and the other is 19th century Taliban. For this analysis, we have chosen two literary works as study materials: *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne, and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini. The latter's female protagonists Hester and Mariam were the focus of this study, where authors' syntactic choices in their passages were inspected stylistically. The main goal of this feminist stylistic analysis was to obtain textual evidence on female agency and passivity in dogmatic religious contexts.

The study provided the contextual framework of both Puritanism in New England, and Taliban in Afghanistan; along with women's situation under such theocracies. The initial theoretical elements were concerned with the establishment processes of these theocracies, their tenets, and commandments. Besides, the theoretical framework relatively synthesized women's different roles in latter theocracies. The goal was to obtain a comprehensive account of women's oppressed and undermined value. This suggests the presence of a link between theocratic communities, and the limited roles of women there. However, our research aimed at proving this argument with evidence that is based on the syntactic textual evidence employed by authors. So, we have laid the theoretical ground for the linguistic elements that foreground and inhibit agency. Also, we attempted to present relevant confirmative proofs on the relationship between theocracies, oppression, and language. Thus, we have pointed to the use of religious discourse as a means to exert power, which can be oppressive, by scrutinizing the position of language related to religion, and language. This relationship suggested that language can play a pivotal part in shaping dogmatic precepts and diffusing it into people's minds. To reinforce this argument, we have sampled passages of Hester Prynne and Mariam

to inspect female's agency and passivity states in their respective extremist communities stylistically.

While Hester Prynne stood on the scaffold in the opening scene, Mariam knelt on it in the closing scene. Also, while Arthur Dimmesdale in *The Scarlet Letter* admitted his sin and died, Rasheed in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* was killed due to his constant abusive actions. Similarly, the stylistic analysis of the female protagonists' passages showed convergent quantitative and qualitative results. In regards to analytical procedures, the second and third chapters described and analyzed the multiple linguistic devices that both authors utilized. While quantitative analysis results appear in two tables, the qualitative analysis follows the extracted samples. The analyses showed that authors' use of dynamic verbs exceeded the use of stative verbs in both characters' analysis, which can contradict our claim of female the protagonists' linguistic passivisation. However, they also showed that certain dynamic verbs were used intransitively; in accordance, their grammatical effect diminished. Besides, the use of non-assertive modals surpassed the assertive ones, hence further textual evidence of suppressed agency. In addition to dynamicity, transitivity, and modality, we have distinguished four linguistic devices that minimized authoritative, powerful tones of Hester and Mariam. Comparing the two analyses obtained, it can be seen that negativity, subjunctivity, passivity, and the perfective aspect have fostered senses of powerlessness, helplessness, and passivity.

One interpretation of this analysis is that syntactic choices provided the ground for a textual stylistic investigation of women's suffering, regardless of whether Hawthorne and Hosseini's choices were intentional or not. Consequently, the results of this research support our idea about the presence of a correlative relationship between theocratic rule and women's oppression. The current study contributes to the substantial body of literature on agency and passivity. It provides supplementary evidence of their crucial role in emphasizing or inhibiting

one's authoritative tone. Nevertheless, this stylistic investigation has examined a significant set of passivity devices, yet it did not inspect their counterparts; for example, affirmation vs. negation; indicative vs. subjunctive; active voice vs. passive voice; or other verb tenses vs. the perfect tense. Besides, one source of weakness could be the manual quantitative data analysis that could affect the accuracy of results.

Finally, a number of possible studies following the same analytical methodology could compare between female characters of the same novel to investigate the distinct characterization methods authors employ. Also, it would be interesting to study the role of extremist theocracies in granting the utmost abusive power to males.

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