



Mohamed Khider University of Biskra
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of Foreign Languages

MASTER THESIS

Letters and Foreign Languages
English Language
Science of the language

Submitted and Defended by:
Helimet Kheira

**Analysis of the Religious Deviation in Puritanical Society in Nathaniel
Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*.**

Board of Examiners:

Ms. Taalah Asma

Mr. LamjadLhamal

Ms. SakhriHajira

Supervised by:

Mr. Harhoura Kamel

2020

Dedication

This thesis is honestly dedicated to all the amazing and special people in my
life:

To the one whose value is beyond words: my mother **Zohra**

To my beloved father **Amar**

To my dear sisters **Hajer, Nesrin and Amel**

To my beautiful brothers **Youness, Mouhamed and Youcef**

To the one who believed in me, **Wahab**

I could not do it without your support

And to my lovely friends **Donya, Chahla, Nouha, Kawther, Nour and Fula.**

Acknowledgments

First, because this could not be done without God's blessing. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the teachers and lecturers who shared their knowledge that still dwells in my brain.

To Mr. Harhoura Kamel who gave me advice and instructions so that I can finish my study.

My thanks also go to: All the teachers of the Branch of English who were the best part of this experience.

Abstract

The Puritan ethic is examined in relation to Hawthorne's romance *The Scarlet Letter*. It is about a common Hester Prynne and a puritan priest Arthur Dimmesdale who were put in a socio-cultural environment which devoted an absolute rely on sinfulness and total depravity of man whose salvation could be gained only by adapting the strict puritan beliefs. Hawthorne addressed elements of contradictions and deviations through his primary characters Hester Prynne, Arthur Dimmesdale and through puritan society. The strict Puritan moral beliefs that existed within New England society created some debatable concepts that contradicted with puritan doctrine. On one hand, society praised the puritan beliefs and on the other hand, they did the contrast. In this study, the main puritan symbols and Hawthorne's character are analyzed in relation to the religious deviation.

Keywords: Religious deviation, Puritan doctrine, The Scarlet Letter, salvation, sin, New England Society, psychoanalysis.

Table of Contents

Dedication.....	I
Acknowledgments	II
Abstract.....	III
Table of Contents	IV
General introduction	1
<i>Chapter One: An Investigation into Hawthorne's Background</i>	
1-1 Introduction	4
1-2 Background of Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864).....	4
1-3 Hawthorne and Puritanism	6
1-4 Hawthorne and Transcendentalism	8
1-4-1 Hawthorne as an anti-transcendentalist.....	10
1-5 Dark Romanticism.....	11
1-6 The Scarlet Letter	12
1-7 Applying Psychoanalysis Approach in Hawthorne's Literature	14
Conclusion	15
<i>Chapter Two: Puritanical Themes in Relation to The Religious Deviation</i>	
2-1 Introduction:	16
2-2 Sin in The Puritan Doctrine Vs in Society	16
2-3 Female Mistreatment	18
2-4 Salvation in Puritan Doctrine Vs Salvation in Puritan Society	20
2-5 The Scarlet A	22
Conclusion	23
<i>Chapter Three: The Psychoanalysis of The Religious Deviation</i>	
3-1 Introduction:	24
3-2 Hester Prynne: The Anti-Puritan	24
3-3 Dimmesdale: The Secret Sinner in the Preacher's Robe.....	28
3-4 The Paradoxical Society:	32
Conclusion	34
General conclusion	35
Works Cited.....	37
Primary Source:	37
Secondary Source:	37

ملخص

Résumé

General introduction

Society in general is ruled by a set of cultural, religious, and philosophical concepts and beliefs which human actions are determined whether right or wrong. This system of principles is called morality. It is often codified by a culture or a group, and thus served to regulate the behavior of its members. This codification is needed to create balance to society. Religion is one of these concepts that play a very important role in the society.

The religious deviation may happen anytime, anywhere, any situation and can be done by anyone. People deviate from their religion because of various reasons; for social factors because the individual is usually expected to behave as society expectations.

The phenomena of religious deviation inspired many writers to create a literary works. One of them is in the novel which is one genre of literary works in which an author presents his/her thoughts and experience into a writing form within dialogues and narratives. It functions as a description of human interactions and experiences in relation with society. Each elements of the novel provide different example of the problem of religious deviation like the religious deviation in society, in characters as well.

The Scarlet Letter is a famous literary work that Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote it in mid of nineteenth century. This novel told a romance in the Puritan society. It discussed human's relationship of Puritan life in the Puritan society. Moreover, the issue with Puritanism is that it brought along some debatable concepts as deviation, the latter being the problem. The real matter here is that Puritanism brought some controversies over the religion itself that it has imposed in literary field on specific. Were they found themselves in conflict and deviation from its laws, but this conflict was inward because they could not reveal what they want to the public because they were afraid from being excluded from society and from facing punishment. Thus, it created a religious deviation from puritan laws in which Nathaniel Hawthorne in his work *The Scarlet Letter* showed it in his main characters and in society as

well. The sphere of the study will be bound to the idea of the religious deviation of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* and tied to the puritan society in which is ruled by strict and rigid laws that everyone who lived in this society has to submit to the limitation of freedom because the circle of human and natural behavior is determined by the society's religious norms.

The issue with Puritanism is that it brought along some debatable concepts as deviation, the latter being the problem. The real matter here is that Puritanism brought some controversies over the religion itself that it has imposed in literary field on specific. In this research we will shed light on this problem of religious deviation in puritanical society in Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel *The Scarlet Letter*. In addition, one should not forget the origin of this religion. Moreover, the behavior of Puritan society in Hawthorne's novel impressed us deeply and involved curiosity to explore the novel. Thus, the researcher expects to explore and find out the religious influence on Puritans society and characters' behavior.

The study will focus on some major questions that deal with the issue presented as an attempt to find the answer that justify the behavior of Hawthorne's main characters and the reaction of the puritan society toward their sin. In addition, this research aims at demonstrating the repression and contradiction of puritan society concerning their beliefs and their behavior that led to the deviation from their puritan religion. In addition to that, this study targets to clarify this religious deviation in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* and we will try to provide this research with some appropriate answers surrounding the complexity of the Puritan society.

The research will be divided into three chapters that attempt to respond to the problematic. The first chapter will present the theoretical background of the writer Nathaniel Hawthorne and a historical overview. The second chapter will be assigned to the practical part that will contain the analysis of the main themes of the puritan religion in relation to the

religious deviation and the novel. The third chapter will be a practical part too that will examine the inner world and the psychology of the main characters of Hawthorne and society as well and answering the research questions.

In this study, the analytic approach will be the main tool as a methodology. In this sense, this method will be highlighted within the author's work concerning the events in the story. By the psychoanalytic approach, we will try to explore the issue from a psychoanalytic perspective to grasp the main points in the problem. Thus, the psychoanalytic method is the main tool to dive into the minds of the characters in the story to explore how the Puritanism deviation depicted in their characters.

**Chapter One: *An
Investigation to Hawthorne's
Background***

1-1 Introduction

Hawthorne wrote during the romantic period in American literature which lasted from 1830 to 1856. He portrayed Puritanism as the rigid religious norms in which the individual has to submit to the limitation of his freedom and although he lived in a puritan society surrounded by a puritan family, but he was not convinced with. He criticized the New England Puritans and explored the effects of this complicated religion. Although written almost 150 years ago, Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* contained concepts relevant to contemporary readers. The problem of alienation and breaking society's rules which many teenagers can readily relate. Thus, *The Scarlet Letter* is not only a historical novel about Puritan Boston, but also a romance which happened 200 years ago before Hawthorne's time. Moreover, Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote his experience in the mid of his age. This novel tells a romance in the Puritan society. It discussed human's relationship of Puritan life in the Puritan society. The novel has a symbol of scarlet letter. The shape of scarlet letter is "A". It means adultery. Furthermore, the "A" refers to a sin of human who broke Puritan's rule. In addition, it discussed the deviation of the main characters from their religion which made them different and the perception of their society of their guilt. Deviation pervaded among Puritan society which created a splay between their beliefs and their actions. Because violation on Puritan norms was unacceptable among Puritan society, each sinner dealt differently with his sin; some people had to keep their sin secretly in order not to be punished by the church and the society.

1-2 Background of Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864)

"He was born in July 04, 1804 in Salem Massachusetts, died on May 19, 1864, at Plymouth, New Hampshire. an American romance novelist and a short story writer who was a master of the allegorical and symbolic tale". (Encyclopedia Britannica Nathaniel Hawthorne).

He lived surrounded by Puritan family members and he started to publish his short stories after his graduation including *Twice Told Tales*, *The Marble Faun*, *The Minister's Black Veil* and *The Scarlet Letter* which belongs to the sub-genre of Dark Romanticism. They are the most famous literary works that created the reputation of Hawthorne in the seventeenth century American literature and of nowadays.

Hawthorne was writer as well as an artist of irony because he used to discuss art, religion, politics and the latest works of historians and novelists of the day with group of men and women. Hawthorne is the obvious example of nineteenth-century writer influenced by and consciously appropriating seventeenth-century Puritan culture.

While some great writers belong to humanity, Hawthorne belongs to his own land or people. He is seen as William J. Long stated in his work as “the greatest imaginative genius since Shakespeare.” (Outlines of English and American Literature 436) and the explanation is that Hawthorne's field was so intensely local that only those who are familiar with it can appreciate him.

Hawthorne wrote during the Romantic Period in American literature which lasted from 1830 to 1865. Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Herman Melville, Edgar Allen Poe, and Walt Whitman were his literary contemporaries (Elizabeth Poe A Teacher's Guide To The Signet Classic Edition of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet* 4). *The Scarlet Letter* is considered a piece of American Romantic literature because it was set in a remote past, the Puritan era 200 years prior to Hawthorne's time because it dealt with the interior psychology of individual characters. As Kahhoul Imene stated in her thesis about Hawthorne “From his *Twice-Told Tales* to his unfinished *Dolliver* romance, he held steadily to the purpose of portraying the moral law against a background of Puritan history. He reproduced the gloomy Puritan world powerfully and single-heartedly. To Hawthorne it was a world in

itself; a world that attracted him.” (Puritanical Dimensions in The Scarlet Letter: Moral Demands Versus Individual needs 6).

1-3 Hawthorne and Puritanism

Puritanism was part of the Protestant Reformation in England in the 1560's. They were a group of English citizens decided to emigrate from their homeland and settle in the Eastern coast of the North America; “The Promised Land” (An Outline of American Literature⁴⁰) as they used to call it, where they could practice their beliefs and make their own society.

Therefore, they wanted to purify the Church of England from Roman Catholic elements which were not Biblical based and demanded a simpler form of Christianity worship as described in the New Testament. Bradford in Miller explained that the Puritan decided to continue the reformation started in Henry VIII's reign until the ecclesiastical polity as stated in the New Testament to be developed (Miller¹).

They were fanatics in their religion, they did not allow holding different religious beliefs and they thought the bible was a book containing all the commands of God and the guidelines to be followed on the earth. They emphasized on reading it and going to the church it was a duty for each citizen. Moreover, they considered anyone who disobeyed the doctrine of the bible would be punished in public. Their behavior was determined already by their religion and if someone committed a crime, he was considered to have sinned against God's principles and as a result, they punished the sinner in a very harsh way.

Puritans believed that God has the arbitrary will to create and maintain the universe “The starting point for Puritan Theology was an emphasis on the majesty, righteous, and sovereignty of God” (Eliade¹⁰³).

Puritans related their social life with political life and they established laws based on their religious beliefs. As Gabriela Castillo and Freddy Jaramillo mentioned “one important point about the Puritan religion is that Puritans did not separate Politics from Religious life. They considered them as one, and they made their religion influence the entire area of law and the way the town was managed.” (Elements of Contrast in Nathaniel Hawthorne70).

The presence of Hawthorne in his writings is a critical commonplace and obviously Hawthorne criticized Puritanism by showing them as apparently religious people, who, under surface, are subjected to evil as every other human being. He understood the complexities of Puritanism but he was not convinced. Consequently, he took every opportunity to cast literary shadows over his Puritan forbearers. In addition, he held view that the religious faith of his Puritan ancestors was rarely sincere. He often depicted Puritan divines, magistrates, and prosperous merchants as hypocritical community leaders using their religious, political or economic power as a means to accomplish their personal objectives and *The Scarlet Letter* is such an example that Hawthorne displays such characteristic .Hawthorne’s presence in his works is a critical commonplace in the first place and living in a Puritan state, in a Puritan town, was such a reason to criticize Puritanism and to write an intense and powerful story which contains the very soul of its faith. The reaction of puritan society was not totally positive; it was not easily recognized by New England people at the time and they perceived it as molestation to their religion. That is why the change was very slow and weak but it was always the center in Hawthorne’s writings.

Not only in *The Scarlet Letter* but in his other works, one can notice that there are common points in all of his stories such as that there is a journey when the characters meet such problems of life as pain, sin and doubt and Hawthorne described differently how they dealt with this problems as the black veil in *The Minister’s Black Veil* and the red “A” in *The Scarlet Letter*. Another point is that his characters usually have some secret guilt which keeps

them a distant from society. They suffer with the inner feelings of mind conscience and the hope for atonement so they are troubled by pride and envy. The focus of Puritanism and the dark part of the human mind led Hawthorne to create stories close to the Gothic novels.

In Barriss Mills' 1948 article entitled *Hawthorne and Puritanism*, Mills gave a brief history of criticism up to that point, stating that some critics viewed Hawthorne as praising the Puritans, that others saw him as criticizing the Puritans, and that still a third group perceived him as trying to mesh history and his personal feelings. While W. C. Brownell "saw in Hawthorne a genuine son of the Puritans" and Herbert Schneider viewed Hawthorne as "reviving the best in Puritanism," Parrington claimed Hawthorne "criticized the Puritans from a skeptical point of view" (78 as cited in Mills). However, one view has largely been ignored: *The Scarlet Letter* as Hawthorne deviating from the Puritan beliefs and holding his characters up against the Puritans as preferred models of redeemable persons.

In *the Scarlet Letter*, when the puritan community showed nothing but antipathy and contempt towards the lover Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale, Hawthorne makes the readers seem as if there is sympathy and compassion and he tried to see their situation from the other perspective, without contempt but with kindness. He was tolerated with Dimmesdale and Hester claiming that every human could fall and commit sin.

1-4 Hawthorne and Transcendentalism

Transcendentalism is a movement of feelings and beliefs rather than a system of philosophy. As Peter B. High stated in his book that the movement began to express itself in New England in the 1830s and continued through the 1840s and 1850s and the leaders of this movement rejected both Puritanism of their ancestors and the newer (An Outline of American Literature 42) because they saw religion as negative and useless and they thought that the wisdom of Christ is great as the philosophy of the great philosophers. Hence, it is not easy to

define this movement because of its complexity. The Transcendentalist Orestes Brownson defined the movement as “the recognition in man of the capacity of knowing truth intuitively...an order of knowledge transcending the sense”.

This movement first originated in Boston and Cambridge, Massachusetts and Concord. Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau and Walt Whitman were the leaders of this movement (Encyclopedia Britannica Transcendentalism American Movement) and they believed in individual rather than the social reform and their works are clearly praising nature considering it as their “Bible”. In 1836, Emerson published his essay *Nature* in which he explained the main principles of Transcendentalism and he called for his generation to “enjoy an original relation to the universal”. In addition, transcendentalists were not an organized group and they did not share a clear doctrine of their movement, but they were independent individuals.

The main tenet of transcendentalism movement was the independence and the American scholar as Richard Ruland and Malcolm Bradbury restated the idea that “we have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe” (From Puritanism to Postmodernism: a History of American Literature 119).

New England Transcendentalism flourished during the period of American history which witnessed a huge change as the expansion and the exploration of new territories, westward migration and the growth of political parties. It was the time of the criticism of the New England community when other new different religious groups started to appear.

For Emerson, independence was the main goal of transcendentalism movement. He believed that America must take its literary independence and for him, this point was explained in *Self-Reliance* in which he stated the beauty and power existed when nature and individual are connected to each other.

Henry David Thoreau also tried to extend Emerson's transcendentalist philosophy in his essay "Nature" in which He explained the importance of nature in the construction of individual and selfhood. In addition, Thoreau was not afraid of adding the political issues directly in his works such as *Civil Disobedience* when he explained his refusal to pay the poll tax to show his opposition to slavery and the conflict with Mexico.

1-4-1 Hawthorne as an anti-transcendentalist

The Transcendentalists had their enemies too and they were attacked by many writers such as Nathaniel Hawthorne who was anti-transcendentalist. Although he was interested in those transcendentalists and admired them, but he criticized them for ignoring those doubts which darken the world .In his essay *The Old Manse*, he criticized Transcendentalism in which he called the discipline of Emerson as "hobgoblins of flesh and blood", "I ...admired Emerson as a poet of deep beauty and austere tenderness but sought nothing from him as a philosopher." (36).

The British scholar Marcus Cunliffe in his book *The Literature of the United States*, stated the difference between Hawthorne, Thoreau and Emerson .According to him, for them, nature was man's true home; to him, nature is beautiful but not concerned with man .They see the torment over sin and damnation is needless; for Hawthorne, when sin entered one's life, there would be no way to be avoided. In addition, they denied the reality of evil while Hawthorne agreed that evil latent in every human heart (96).

Although Hawthorne criticized Transcendentalists, but he accepted their epistemology in theory and ontology and that what distinguished him from his Transcendentalist contemporaries because the object of his art were transcendental ideas and forms, but his approach for them was distinctive.

Even though Hawthorne was close to many Transcendentalists, including Emerson, he was rather peripheral to the movement. He even poked fun at *Brook Farm* and his transcendental contemporaries in the Introductory essay *The Custom House*, referring to them as his “dreamy brethren.” (*The Scarlet Letter* 22).

1-5 Dark Romanticism

Dark Romanticism is a literary subgenre of Romanticism from its very inception in the late eighteenth century, romanticism’s celebration of euphoria and sublimity had been dogged by an equality intense fascination with melancholia, crime, the grotesque, and the irrational. The name “Dark Romanticism” was given to this form by the literary theorist Mario Praz in his lengthy study of the genre published in 1930, “The Romantic Agony” This form of literary movement focused on the unhappy depths of the inner life and on the psychological intensity (The Audiopedia. “What is Dark Romanticism? What Does Dark Romanticism mean? Dark Romanticism meaning.” Online video clip. Youtube, 17 September 2016).

As Catherine Breillant stated about Dark Romanticism “I am eternally, devastatingly romantic, and I thought people would see it because ‘romantic’ does not mean ‘sugary’ it is dark and tormented...the furor of passion, the despair of idealism that you can’t attain.”

According to the critic G.R. Thomson, “the Dark Romantics adapted images of anthropomorphized evil in the form of Satan, devils, ghosts, and werewolves” Mary Shelley, and John William Polidori, who are frequently linked to Gothic fiction, are also sometimes referred to as Dark Romantics. Their tales and poems commonly feature outcasts from society, personal torment and uncertainty as to whether the nature of man will bring him salvation or destruction.

The American form of this subgenre appeared on the writers Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Herman Melville. As a reaction to the perfectionist beliefs of Transcendentalism, these darker contemporaries emphasized human fallibility and proneness to sin and self-destruction, as well as the difficulties inherent in attempts at social reform.

Hawthorne is one of the most significant American Dark Romantic writers. That was because he was born and lived in New England where the famous Salem witch trials took place in 1692 and one of Hawthorne's ancestors was a judge on that period of time. It is important to mention that nothing changed in New England since the Salem trials to Hawthorne's time, mainly the social and religious tendencies in people's mentality and in that environment. Hawthorne passed his socialization and that caused him two important details. First, Hawthorne belonged to a conservative religious family being different from the other Romanticists who were from the highly-educated society. Second, Hawthorne was different from his contemporaries whose hypocrite and unnatural moral views he denied and criticized. In his famous work, *The Scarlet Letter* he portrayed the conservative mentality of the New England using dark oppressive atmosphere and some elements of gothic romanticism.

1-6 The Scarlet Letter

Nathaniel Hawthorne is one of the most important writers in English Literature and he was considered as such after the publishing of his great novel, *The Scarlet Letter* in 1850 which is considered as a masterpiece. At first, it was not very popular or important, and it was not until a few years later that it gained the attention it truly deserved.

Puritans were very extremely religious that they became fanatics in their own religion. *The Scarlet Letter* contained an explanation of how religiously Puritans acted and how rigid their attitudes were against any violation committed in the town.

The Scarlet Letter depicted Hawthorne's understanding of Puritan doctrines and society as well as his observations through the Romantic lens of the 1850s. He merged the perspectives in order to analyze his very personal feelings surrounding his mother's death. Hawthorne used writing as a mean of purging as Michael J. Colacurcio asserts that "The Scarlet Letter must be seen as Hawthorne's way of testing the limits of Puritan theology as a way of making sense out of some deep and passionate forms of human experience"

The Scarlet Letter is a story about sin, revenge and salvation which sin is a part of the individual life, it is a part of the human instinct .Sometimes, human break law that contradicted with his religious beliefs for his instinct .This story is based on the puritan society which punished its member who had done deviation rules of Puritanism norms and values.

The readers have many responses after reading *The Scarlet Letter*. This novel developed reader's knowledge and vision towards this book. Many people argued that *The Scarlet Letter* is a good book because it is a story which seems really happen, others gave negative response claiming that it was not pleasant.

According to Elizabeth Poe, for Hawthorne, writing about the past gave him the freedom to present different versions of what might have happened. Also, the genre of the romance allowed him to embellish the relationship between humans and nature (A Teacher's Guide to The Signet Classic Edition of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* 4).

Hawthorne used great literary skills in the description of the novel. He wrote a perfect plot with all the characteristics of a romance and he brought to mind history thanks to his style and the use of imagination and the choice of words. Moreover, Hawthorne focused to write about the inner feelings of the characters and he preferred to exploit the human psyche through the study of the dark side of human consciousness.

In conclusion, we can clearly say that *The Scarlet Letter* is both a historical and romantic because it narrated some Puritan history, facts and placed the plot in a specific time of history. The novel is also of the romantic genre because it described a forbidden love between Dimmesdale and Hester who fought for their love against the society.

1-7 Applying Psychoanalysis Approach in Hawthorne's Literature

As Hande Isaoglu stated that Sigmund Freud provides the opportunity to analyze the literary characters through the use of his psychoanalytic theory (A Freudian Psychoanalytic Analysis of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* 500). Hawthorne's literature is said to be appropriate for the study of the psychoanalysis. Thus, Freud's ideas and assumptions can be perfectly tied in a psychoanalysis of Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*.

In studying psychology, Freud mentioned a theory that the result of the contradiction and inconsistency between the id, ego and superego brought about conflict which led to repression and displayed an eternal conflict between social appropriateness, moral righteousness and religious aptness. In this situation, the human mind instead of expressing his desires or problems, it resorts to repress them all. So, according to Freud's study, the undamaged mind or personality required a balance between the id, ego and superego.

The unconscious part of the mind is another important concept for Freud. It affected our actions, feelings, and relationships in which this cause anxiety and troubling personality traits.

Psychoanalytic analysis of *The Scarlet Letter* affords data about the psychological states of the main characters and their actions so, later on to be analyzed according to the Freudian concepts with reference to their past memories and their inner psych that caused the religious deviation.

Conclusion

Nathaniel Hawthorne was not a Puritan of the old type, but he was obviously the child of those forebears. He had reached a point where he could view the Puritan conceptions of life and fate with some degree of detachment. He thought about sin, guilt and the dark side of the soul. Although he was wide streak of Puritanism, he refused it and did not let it interfere in his soul as it did to his ancestors. Although he lived in a Puritan society, but he criticized the moral beliefs that existed within Puritanism and asked questions that few of his fellows cared about and that what made him different among his contemporaries. He took these beliefs and reshaped it with an aesthetic piece of writing. Hawthorne was clearly free from the spirit of Puritans and he was argued that the production of art should be based on the removal of the Puritan reservations and human are free from any rigid thoughts that could be an obstacle in his life. Although he was attracted by Transcendentalism and he admired the principle of self-reliance, but he criticized them for not observing the moral life of the human. His writing proved that and *The Scarlet Letter* is the best example which Hawthorne discussed sin and the feeling of being guilt in a Puritan society that believed in punishment. *The Scarlet Letter* is considered both historical and romantic novel because Hawthorne talked about a specific period of time in New England society and discussed a love story between a couple who faced the society to live together using his own style of writing including Dark Romanticism and Gothic elements to describe the long suffering of the characters Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale.

Chapter Two: *Puritanical
Themes in Relation to the
Religious Deviation*

2-1 Introduction:

The Scarlet Letter is a story of an event that happened during Puritan times, a love story between a common woman Hester Prynne and the priest Arthur Dimmesdale who committed sin and the result was Pearl, the illegitimate child. Puritans had very rigid rules and beliefs and any violation on these principles lead to punishment and humiliation. Moreover, Hawthorne described Puritan society and their behavior among each other and he tried to let the readers feel the hypocrisy of society and the suffering of the sinner in his society and in his inner world too. In addition, the novel revealed to us many contradicted aspects that puritan society lived in which was resulted from their deep disrespect to their puritan religion. In this chapter, we focused on sin, female treatment, salvation and The Scarlet A as the attractive themes that can explain and analyze the religious deviation of the puritan society as well as the characters in which their actions were contradicted with their puritan beliefs.

2-2 Sin in the Puritan Doctrine Vs Sin in Puritan Society

The real understanding of this concept seemed not easily achievable. It needs a careful analysis especially when it is linked to a certain religious group who had their own thoughts and beliefs concerning the idea of sin and sinner.

According to puritans, there was no acceptable reason to justify sin or to forgive the sinner. While sin was a part of the human behavior, puritans did not accept it or even tolerated with, they were fanatic in treating the sinner. They believed that sinner should follow certain steps to confess and reach forgiveness from their God.

According to Puritanism, sin was the essential human condition and all human are subject to commit sin and only God can give forgiveness.

They also believed in collective guilt in which they could not let the sinner continue sinning because for them, they were all sinners and they were responsible too just like the one who committed sin. Edmund S. Morgan mentioned that “In view of such a belief the reason for restraining and punishing sin is obvious. Since the whole group had promised obedience to God, the whole group would suffer for the sins of any delinquent member unless, that member was punished”. (The Puritan Family 10)

According to Edmund S. Morgan Sin was a violation of order, grace a restoration of order” (The Puritan Family 15); sin was an act that contradicted with a certain religious norm.

According to puritans, a good person who would go to heaven were the one who attended the church and worked hard and for them, they were elected by their God. However, the one who did not go to the church and who was deficient in his religious beliefs, they believed that those were elected by the devil. That is why we saw that most puritans practiced their puritan worship because of God’s fear not God’s love.

However, Hawthorne portrayed sin as a tool to show that flow in puritan society which made them deviate from the main principles of their religion. It seemed that their perception of the sin of Hester and Dimmesdale were contradicted with their puritan values. Once they knew that Hester committed sin, they rejected and humiliated her while they could treat her with tolerance and acceptance as their religion provided so she could feel she was safe in her society.

Hawthorne also explains that heir obedience to laws made them unable to feel any kind of sympathy for anyone who broke their religious norms. In addition, Puritans believes that any person, who broke their rules and laws they sinned against God.

Their assault against Hester because of her sin, made her withdrew from society in which she decided to live in isolation with no help or tolerance. The fact was that society

appeared that they strongly believe in their religion values but when it came to practice, they did not follow it and they deviate from their religion principles.

It is clear that what really matters for puritans was the apparent and announced sin rather than the hidden one. It seems that they believe that all human were naturally sinners but when it came to reality they do not, because Dimmesdale is a sinner but they did not even expect it on contrary, he is the example of the good man and he is beloved by all. However, Hester is not loved by society because she confesses her sin to the public.

Moreover, Hawthorne tried to explain this religious deviation concerning sin by the example of Hester when she is humiliated and criticized by her society most of the time but when they need her needle work, they turned to be so kind with her because it was for their personal interest not because of their religious doctrine. It means that their acceptance of sinner depended on what he could offer them and on to what extent they can benefit from him.

2-3 Female Mistreatment

Puritans had their own ideas concerning society, family, and women. While women play a very important role in every society, but during Puritan times, women were treated as inferior to men because they used to believe in the role of Eve in the original sin; believing that she caused Adam to commit sin against God.

Keddour Halim stated that men and women are placed unequal positions since the day God created them. For a long time, men are considered to have rational mind and superior intelligence and the capacity for leadership (The Notion of Sin in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*206).

Women were not allowed to talk and express their thoughts in church because puritan men established a belief that knowledge, experience, and power were limited only to the male members of their society. Women were treated as they were capable of adoring Satan.

Hester Prynne, the main female character of the novel who suffered from the oppression of her society because she committed sin which was adultery. Once they knew that she was a sinner, their treatment changed toward her without blaming the man she committed sin with.

It is clear that Hester carried all the effects of what Dimmesdale supposed to deal with. Even puritan society showed no equality and tolerance with her, but Hester was brave and strong enough to face all this oppression Colacurcio wrote about Hester as “an extraordinary woman who falls afoul of a theocratic and male-dominated society”.(Doctrines and Differences 179).

Furthermore, it seemed that Dimmesdale was afraid but he felt secure and safe because his community would tolerate with him because he is a man with good reputation and even if they knew that he was the sinner from the beginning of the story, they would tolerate with him and accept him around them.

In fact, although Hester tried so hard to remain strong but, she looked weak at the beginning of the novel when she tried to ignore the people who were cruel with her and when she remembered her past when she used to be with her family and this pain made her silent and sad. “Her silent suffering eventually wins the sympathy of others but still fails to gain her complete acceptance by the Puritan society that surrounds her.” (*The Scarlet Letter* 30).

Hawthorne described the treatment of men to women in puritan society. In addition, that they considered them inferior and weak, they were allowed to work only in home and

their thoughts were not needed or even discussed. Also, men thought that they can judge people as if they were God.

Hawthorne describes puritan males as cruel and grim who were treating women as inferior and weak to the extent that puritan women accepted this situation. Moreover, when Hester tries to rebel against puritan treatment of female, they intend to break her down and exclude her from society in order not to affect the puritan women.

Puritan leaders judged Hester by the external signs instead of the internal one. This is not a justification of Hester's sin but an explanation of the surge of puritan leaders when they found a woman's case. It seemed that it could be acceptable if the sinner was a man not a woman, they would accept it and justify it.

Moreover, puritans were supposed to show and reflect their puritan beliefs when they face problem, but it appears that they refer back to their own interpretations which were deviated and contradicted with their puritan norms. A good example of that is when Hester was on the scaffold surrounded by the townspeople, they were supposed to be merciful, but they were wrathful. Obviously, for them, a single wrong act or sin made by women would end her life and her destiny is to face a public shame, no matter what her sin was.

2-4 Salvation in Puritan Doctrine Vs Salvation in Puritan Society

Puritans believed in predestination and salvation, they used to think men and women could go to hell or heaven; however, they believed women were more susceptible than men to be tempted by Satan. Women more than men could become witches and serve the black man and his evil ways instead of serving almighty God.

According to England puritan's perception of salvation, they believed that only God knows who is saved and who is damned (Morgan Visible Saints 67) and human can do

nothing to change salvation. This meant that society could never interfere to change this fact because salvation could be achieved through self-awareness and deep, meaningful repentance.

Dimmesdale is the good example that shows this deviation in salvation. While he was viewed by puritan society as among the saved because of his good works and his reputation, but in fact Dimmesdale's life was far from what he showed. He seemed a very religious man who believed in puritan doctrine but in his inner thought he was not; he had his own belief of salvation which was totally different from his religion.

Dimmesdale shows to society that he followed the puritan beliefs but in fact he was living a contradicted life, because he hid his sin of adultery and his hypocrisy to remain as a good person within the society.

A good example of his hypocrisy is when he wanted to deliver from his sin and ask for salvation, he did not do it as his puritan religion recommend, on contrary, he tortured himself by whipping his body as Lethie Chalise Thomson wrote in her thesis "Dimmesdale reverts to midnight vigils and flogging himself behind closed doors as physical relief for the strain built through his psychological distress". (A moral Wilderness 8). It is clear that Dimmesdale fell in a psychological conflict that led him to live in two different worlds; living as a good man with society and living as a sinner in solitude.

Another example of deviation in the concept of salvation is Hester Prynne, the main female character who reacted against her religious beliefs when she committed sin with Dimmesdale and refused to obey the puritan rules of salvation when she decided to go to the forest rather than the church.

Hawthorne wrote in his novel that "the world's law was no law for her mind" (164). In this sense, one can see that Hester rejects the Puritan perception of salvation because she did

not ask for forgiveness as her religion demanded but she focused on how to make her situation better. It appeared that Hester thought that salvation is an individual process rather than a puritanical one. In that sense, she decided to escape from her society and live alone in a small cottage where she thought that she could feel self-relief and restart her life far from society rejection.

Puritan society also interfered in the process of salvation of the people, while it was supposed to be only between God and the sinner. When they knew Hester's sin, they scorned her and in order to let the town's people know that she was a sinner, they punished her by wearing the scarlet A in all her dresses as a symbol to her adultery sin. Moreover, they treated her with contempt and this antipathy continued until she decided to escape from society. It is clear that puritan society's behavior conflicted with puritan the doctrine of salvation because they wanted to choose who was saved and who was damned and forget about their puritan beliefs.

Hawthorne also portrays the uncertainty of the puritan society with their puritan doctrine in the concept of salvation because their harsh reactions toward the sinners

2-5 The Scarlet A

In all along the story, there was no fixed significance of the red A. At the beginning of the story, *The Scarlet Letter* A was given by the magistrates to signify Hester's sin which was adultery so that all townspeople can figure this out.

At the middle of the novel, the townspeople changed their views about Hester and their perception of the Scarlet A. When she helped them in making needle art work, they changed the meaning of The Scarlet A from Adultery to "Able" when they said that it meant "Able so strong was Hester Prynne, with a woman's strength." (*The Scarlet Letter* 137).

Another interpretation of the A is when they saw it in the sky and they said that it meant angel “A great red letter in the sky, the letter A, which we interpret to stand for Angel.” (The Scarlet Letter134).

Puritan society thought that Hester’s punishment was not enough, they wanted to punish her as harsh they can, they forgot the puritan doctrine when they said “this woman has brought shame upon us all, and ought to die. Is there no law for it? Truly, there is, both in the Scripture and the statute-book.”(The Scarlet Letter44). Actually, what they did to Hester has nothing to do with the beliefs of their religion.

In fact, all these different significances of The Scarlet A made by the puritan society summarized the contradiction and the deviation they lived in because they interpreted it according to their personal interest

Conclusion

The novel exposes to us the oppression made by society on those who committed sin and their disrespect to their puritan doctrine. Puritans wanted a life without sin and sin in *The Scarlet Letter* was not confessed publicly as the puritan doctrine allowed. On contrary, every sinner felt that it was dangerous to confess sin in such society because they would be misunderstood and harshly punished by the townspeople. Also, the cruelty of Puritans towards a sinner and their interference in his life was a kind of profanation against God instead of a way to maintain God’s justice in the world have trusted God to punish the sinner. Moreover, salvation was not an individual process, they wanted to decide who was saved and who was damned and punish the sinner publicly. This explained not their independence from puritan religion because they still considered themselves as puritan, but explained the separation and the deviation from their religion.

*Chapter Three: The
Psychoanalysis of the
Religious Deviation*

3-1 Introduction:

The Scarlet Letter is a reflection of the society which existed in the 17th century Puritan America, which was considered as a very rigid and harsh community because of the religious norms they used to believe in. The novel also revealed to us the real contradicted situation of puritans concerning their beliefs and their behavior. The psychoanalytic approach provides us the opportunity to analyze the main characters in order to understand their behavior. The present chapter deals with a deep psychoanalysis of the main characters and society who their actions were deviated from their puritan beliefs because the comprehension of the character's behavior can be achieved by the understanding of the inner depth of the characters and analyzing their id, ego and superego as Freud suggested with reference to their past memories.

3-2 Hester Prynne: The Anti-Puritan

People feel they live in a permissive society in which Christian virtue is largely expelled from public life, a society which has invaded the church with its no-fault theology, no longer admitting sin. It is a world where people have the right to choose their own life pattern, to decide to their best knowledge and belief which convictions to support, to define their own ways of life in a multitude of ways that their ancestors could not control.

However, in a Puritan society, life was different and it has laws to cover every aspect of life. There, the Lord required absolute honesty and condemns everything in false and unjust. Thus, not surprisingly, human nature rebelled against such strict supervision.

It can clearly be said that Hawthorne narrated forbidden love between two people who were supposed to keep their promises to others and fight for their love. The goal of Hawthorne, as a romantic writer is to write about such a romantic subject: a rebellious woman who refused to conform to society's code.

Hawthorne gives a highly independent attitude to Hester Prynne contrasted with Dimmesdale. He paints this woman as morally and physically strong and he relates her character with resistance to the rigid puritan society. He describes her as a woman who wants a new world in which they will have a new start and a new life. Harold Bloom, a literary critic, explained that "the American heroes, seemingly alone free, and without family or history, test the proposition that a new world might bring a new self and society into being." (137) because it was clear that Hester prefers living alone without any society standards and create her own world.

Hester is seen as an example of democratic individualism surrounded by a hostile community shaped by religious and political incorporations. However, Hawthorne portrays Hester that her strength and identity formed positively as well as negatively by her society. In the novel where Hawthorne described Hester's strength, he mentioned that even though her separation from Puritan community "had made her strong", they also had "taught her much amiss" (170).

In addition, Roger Lundin and Anthony C. Thiselton concerning the formation of Hester's life, they wrote that it was a result of her participation in the personal struggles of the others of her community (The Promise of Hermeneutics.123) because the struggle against the other's rule and her indiscipline to her society helped her in shaping her identity.

Hawthorne's novel deals with the struggle of the individual in a permissive society, a struggle of winning the self instead of acquiescing. Hawthorne's characters are isolated individuals because they reject society's standards. However, they are disposed to sin and that led to their destruction.

While Hester and Dimmesdale struggle with the perception of their society, Hester's perception was different and stronger than Dimmesdale because she prevailed upon the strict

judgment of the Puritans and she created her own identity based on her values as Zaheer Ahmad stated that she thinks that the Puritan society with its self denying doctrines cast dishonor upon human passions. They judge by external signs instead of the interior conscience of men (Hester Prynne as a Rebel to Puritan Society in Hawthorne's Romance the Scarlet Letter²⁵) because Hester shows a rebellious spirit against the puritan society.

Hawthorne takes pains in order to describe the struggle and the willful of Hester within the community. At the beginning of *The Scarlet Letter*, when she emerges from the prison Hawthorne wrote "yet a haughty smile, and a glance that would not be abashed" (3) as she is not scared of the crowd around her. In addition, when Puritan society considered her sin and the result of it "Pearl" as a shame and dishonor, Hester did not show concern or a penitent. However, she even drew attention to the scarlet A which was sewn in her dress. The narrator stated that although her clothing "seemed to express the attitude of her spirit, the desperate recklessness of her mood, by its wild and picturesque peculiarity" (53). Hester the anti-puritan arrived in splendor, shocking the crowd with her self-confident and courage as an interaction to her hints that she was not thinking to obey the Puritan magistrates.

Hester Prynne is considered as a good example of the conflict between the puritan morals and the human needs and desires. She plays out her subconscious desires and this is a purely Freudian fact.

Hester Prynne is portrayed by Hawthorne as a young woman who falls down into her desires without taking into consideration the strict rules of puritan religion and society. This deviation from the puritan rules by Hester resulted in wearing the scarlet letter on her dresses for the rest of her life because not having a secret love affair for a married woman was one of the most important rules in puritan society.

Hester deviated from her religious rules because of two main things: her needs and desires as a lonely woman and her desperate waiting for a real love relationship, even she was married, that is why she behaved in a propulsive way guided by her id to satisfy her unconscious repressed needs. When Hester finds love with Arthur Dimmesdale, she gave up to the temptation of her id and committing adultery although she knew it was forbidden in her religion. She deviates from her religion and the result was the birth to an illegitimate child branded a scarlet *A* on her chest as a symbol of her sin.

Hawthorne described Hester's inner feeling when she was on the scaffold surrounded by the town's people, holding her daughter. She was immediately satisfied with her id and that was beautiful in the wrong way because she was holding her beautiful child Pearl and embroidered scarlet letter on her chest as a significance to her sin.

Freud suggested that people are ruled by their subconscious; yet, they are judged by their deeds and actions not their subconscious desires and plans. In Hawthorne's novel, Hester was judged by her deeds so, according to the laws of puritan religion her punishment was supposed to be death "This woman has brought shame upon us all, and ought to die. Is there not law for it? Truly there is, both in the Scripture and the statute-book." (The Scarlet Letter⁴⁴)

After she leaves the prison, Hester does not know how to work to feed herself and her daughter since she was publicly humiliated. She is alone and no one wanted to help her so, she struggles to live and she moves to a small wooden cottage where she starts sewing with passion and strength. This new life that Hester adopted made her alienated from society that humiliated her and she learned how to live alone with her inner feelings.

Hester is very passionate and her art of sewing is the sign of this, repressed desires and creativity. When she sewed the scarlet letter on her dresses, she expressed her repressed

passion to the outer world and to convince her society that the sin she committed was not that weird and it might happen to anyone when they could not control their feelings.

However, she tries to purify her soul and body by earning money from her needle work and to do charity works. In the novel, when she was between her id and ego, she embellished clothes to show the strong influence of her id.

At the end of the novel, Hester behaved and followed her id when she decided to escape with Dimmesdale and Pearl to Europe. She saw in her plan the end of her sufferings from the burdens of her sin and the end of Dimmesdale's sufferings and the relief from Chillingworth's revenge plans to Dimmesdale.

Fleeing to Europe was controlled by her id. She sees Europe the best place to start new life away from the place she committed her sin. When she returns to see Dimmesdale and they started to plan for escaping together, she remembers her passion she was submitted to her id and her ego and superego were absent and she was not aware of the results of her decision.

3-3 Dimmesdale: The Secret Sinner in the Preacher's Robe

Arthur Dimmesdale is one of the main characters in *The Scarlet Letter* who plays an important role in representing the social issue in the novel. He is a clergyman that suffers from a conflict of sin and confession that leads him into a psychological conflict.

Nathaniel Hawthorne portrayed Arthur Dimmesdale as the supposed example of Puritanism standards in contrast to Hester. The minister tries to hide the ways he deviated from puritan norms. He struggled to continue appearing as the good puritan man and to keep the sin he committed secret.

Dimmesdale plays an important role in representing the social issues of Puritanism. He was a clergyman who dedicated himself to serve his congregation through his preaching. The narration above shows that Dimmesdale is a talented man who has a high intellectuality and religiosity, however, he suffered from a conflict of sin and confession which led him to his self-destruction. Henry James stated that "*The Scarlet Letter* contained such a definitive portrait of a fallen minister that any novel with a similar character is likely to suggest a comparison" (Henry James in Martin 109).

The town's people appreciated Dimmesdale, they even described him as it was mentioned in the novel "They fancied him the mouth-piece of Heaven's messages of wisdom, and rebuke, and love" (*The Scarlet Letter* 98). His reputation was notable among his society in contrast to Hester which was humiliated. However his religious deviation was not apparent to public, he was totally the contradictory of what the society thought of him; a clergyman with deviated deeds.

At the beginning of the novel, Dimmesdale did not accept the fact that he was a sinner and he let Hester suffer from their guilt alone. That was an example of hypocrisy of Dimmesdale because he saw injustice in his decision when he decides to repress his sin and let Hester confess and face her society alone. These weaknesses of Dimmesdale occurred when the three aspects of his personality: id, ego and superego which was in conflict; he could not know what to do anymore.

Dimmesdale is very sad and stressed because of his past and his present; he worried about his past because of what he did with Hester and the forgiveness of God and sad because of his future because he did not want to live this lie for long, he wanted to tell the truth but also to protect his reputation. He knew that there was no hope for better changing because he would be hung and ashamed for his betrayal. So, Dimmesdale lived this

complicated feeling in his inner mind that would never let go of his sin on the contrary, it led to his destruction.

Arthur Dimmesdale, the clergy man who unleashed his desires for a married woman according to the puritan rules which he represented. However, Dimmesdale could not control his desire for Hester Prynne and he ignored his superego by having an affair with Hester and he submitted to his id desires. As a result, he committed adultery. According to the novel, Dimmesdale was in struggle with his id, ego, and superego. This struggle affected both his personality and his behavior.

Dimmesdale's actions were obviously contradicted to his puritan beliefs since he was preacher. "He is represented as a hypocrite dealing with his conflict of adultery sin"(Arthur Dimmesdale's Hypocrisy as a Puritan Clergyman in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*33). He suffered from the oppressed weight of his sin. However, he was not strong enough to confess publicly of his crime because he did not want to damage his reputation and the noble image that the town's people had of him.

From the beginning of the story until the end, Dimmesdale does not follow his feelings and emotions only for twice: when he had an affair with Hester and when they decided to escape to Europe. He acted just like non puritan preacher man without taking into consideration the effect of his plans. Hawthorne described the feeling of Dimmesdale after the decision they made: "The decision once made; a glow of strange enjoyment threw its flickering brightness over the trouble of his breast."(*The Scarlet Letter*, 219).

Dimmesdale and Hester are controlled both by their id. They were not aware of the consequences of their actions and Dimmesdale could not resist Hester's love because his id gave him power; which was incorrect and fake power, to face all the difficulties that he faced.

Moreover, Dimmesdale was suffering from his inner world. The conflict between his id and ego caused a change in his personality because when he refused to reveal his sin made him repress feelings and because of this repression, it led him to a bad health. His bodily disease was a result of a psychosomatic conflict of his id and superego.

Dimmesdale wanted to get rid of his self-psychosomatic punishment at the same time he did not have the courage to confess his sin. He could not accept the idea that Boston's preacher would be Boston's biggest sinner.

Dimmesdale kept his sin and feeling repressed for all these years and he did not feel relief only when he confessed publicly. Finally, when he feels that death is close to him, he confesses his sin publicly because he knows that there was nothing more to lose and he is seeking only his salvation.

Dimmesdale feels comfortable and courageous when he confessed and he thought that he purified his soul. However, he is still far away from Hester and his daughter Pearl and this was another kind of punishment for him after his death. His feeling was described by Hawthorne in the following lines:

“My little Pearl, said he feebly and there was a sweet and gentle smile over his face, as of a spirit sinking into deep repose; nay, now that the burden was removed, it seems as if almost he would be sportive with the child, dear little Pearl, wilt thou kiss me now?” (*The Scarlet Letter* 268)

Dimmesdale succeeded to solve the conflict between his id and superego when he followed his conscious part and confess his sin. What made Dimmesdale ashamed so unbearable was that he deviated from his religion and that he was a holy man who teach his people the puritan rules and that was because he followed his id from the beginning.

After the meeting of the forest with Hester, Dimmesdale lived in dilemma because both his conscious and unconscious were affected. He was always weak towards Hester and he wanted to repress all these feelings and emotions toward Hester because she reminds him of his sin and all the past memories which made him live in a cruel psychological situation.

As a result, for Dimmesdale, the puritan community represented his superego and Hester represented his id; and Dimmesdale was wavering between the two aspects. Most of the time, Dimmesdale tortured himself morally and physically until one night he decided to confess in his election day. He stands up on the scaffold and confessed to the puritan public, he shows them the imprinted A on his chest just like what Hester did with the embroidered A on her dress. He wanted to be free from his conscious and feeling of sorrow.

Once he confessed, Dimmesdale feels peace and finally he accepted his destiny and he was ready to death. Unlike Hester, Dimmesdale was not courageous enough to face the result of his sin and he could not find balance between his three aspects of psyche; that is why he could not find happiness. In the end, Dimmesdale died, the healer of people's, could not heal his personality and make balance between his id, ego and superego.

3-4 The Paradoxical Society:

Through the different sources of history, adultery was not accepted or not even known in the period of Puritanism. In Puritan society, they refused to talk about such crime or even to imagine it. So far, *The Scarlet Letter* served Hawthorne aims of using Puritanism to show that the effect of such sins could live forever in the sinner's life and Puritan society will not forget.

Puritan society tried to base everything in their lives on religion. Their reaction against sin was rigid and harsh most of the time. Hawthorne shows that social repression is used by Puritan society, basically psychic repression to make the people easy to control. When they knew that Hester committed sin, they tried to treat her as an alien to their society because they used a very rigid psychological treatment inasmuch as she decided to live far away from them in a cottage.

Nathaniel Hawthorne also describes how cruel Puritans act when they started using Hester as the model of transgression. They decided that she will go to hell because of her offense against God. He also said that evidence of sin of humans could always be exposed at any time since making errors is the nature of humanity; he just wanted to mention that there was no difference between Puritans and other people because all human beings are the same; imperfect people with guilt and secret faults within their hearts.

Hawthorne gives an example of puritan hypocrisy against people who according to Puritans were sinners. He mentioned when puritan society rejected and humiliated Hester most of the time, but when they needed her needle work, they totally forgot what they had done to her over a long period of time. It seemed that personal interests were more powerful than the supposed laws of God expressed in the Bible. Which the worst sin was for puritans: to be unfaithful and hypocrite or to commit adultery.

Hawthorne portrays who really is the embodiment of evil creates hypocrisy of puritanical views towards sins and evil. He mentioned that those who committed sin publicly and confessed were the purest then those who hide their sin under their reputation and religion deeds.

Conclusion

After we analyzed the psychological part of Hester, Dimmedale and society as well, one can see that the two lovers do not have balanced and healthy identity because they are drowned in a conflict between their id, ego and superego. Also, the effects of the interference of society in the personal process of guilt, salvation, and sin upon different individuals indicates that their internal incongruity with the Puritan doctrine. There is, first of all, Hester Prynne, a noble and strong woman despite her disobedience to the Puritan rules which painted badly her life. She has sinned not because she wanted to break the social rules, but because love is a desire given to all women and men by Nature.

After analyzing the main symbols, it can be noticed that the behavior of Puritan society toward each other indicated the unannounced uncertainty with their religion. Their actions contradicted with their religious beliefs but they still not convinced with the antimony they lived in. Moreover, Hawthorne's characters were depraved and bad and society as well. Their behavior was a response to the fact that the society they lived in shaped their character based on that of their elders.

General conclusion

The Scarlet Letter is a mirror to the Puritan society and Nathaniel Hawthorne succeeded in conveying the message to reveal the flaws of puritan society and the hypocrisy of their reactions toward any religious transgression. Hawthorne's powerful style of imagination, in *The Scarlet Letter* and most of his romances, identified a vast range of moral values and he was convinced that real moral growth could only happen when society truly convinced with puritan beliefs and realize that they are drawn to evil as well as good.

In the novel, Hawthorne was more concerned with the lives and the relationships of his two main characters Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale in which their behavior was affected by the puritan culture and the society they lived in.

Puritan society deviated from their religion and violated puritan laws, but this was most of the time inmost and secret because they wanted to appear just like they are convinced with. That is why we saw the situation of a psychological conflict in their characters which led them, eventually, to self destruction.

Sigmund Freud stated that the main objective of the psychoanalysis is to understand and interpret the behavior of the individual in which are shaped by their unconscious desires and the repressed feelings. His theory helped to find a justification for the behavior of the human by a deep analysis of the id, ego and superego. These three parts are connected to each other; the id works for the pleasure principle, the ego works for the reality principle and the superego works as a bridge between ego and id. When there is no balance between the three elements, conflict happens. After analyzing the main characters and society of Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* with relation to the Freudian concepts, it is

found that id, ego and superego do not work in harmony and not balanced. Sometimes they are affected by their ids, egos and sometimes they face the rigid rules of puritans.

Yet, the psychological pressure of puritan society on Hester and their intervention in her personal decision of redemption, made her isolated and alienated even though she struggled to move on and start a new life. The individual was nothing but a threat in puritan society that is why they wanted to defeat her attempt of rebellion to stop any other try of such act.

Furthermore, the clear unbalance of the three elements of psyche in the personality of Hester and Dimmesdale led them to an internal conflict because Dimmesdale could not achieve self-esteem because his apparent personality contradicted with his inner one.

On the other hand, living in this rigid society, Hester created her own world in which she thought she would find peace and self-determination away from the puritan beliefs

As a result, each element we analyzed indicted that most of the puritan society were deviated but differently, some people who decided to commit sin publicly and others who choose to keep their sin secret and act like religious people. Thus, hypocrisy and degradation spread among them.

Works Cited

Primary Source:

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. 1994. "*The Scarlet Letter*". New York: Dover Publication Inc.

Secondary Source:

Bloom, "Harold. Holden Caulfield". New York, Chelsea House Publishers, 2005.

Bradford, William." Of Plymouth Plantation",1620-1647. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc, 1952.

Cunliffe, Marcus. "The Literature of the United States". New York, Penguin Books, 1963.

Eliade, Mircea (Ed). "The Encyclopedia of Religion". New York: Macmillan, 1987, Publishing Company.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "Nature", Boston and Cambridge: J. Munroe & company, 1849.

Encyclopedia Britannica. "Nathaniel Hawthorne", 30 June 2020

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Nathaniel-Hawthorne>.

High, B. Peter. 1986. "An Outline of American Literature". New York: USA Longman Inc.

Hawthorne Nathaniel. "Mosses from an Old Manse". Boston: James R. Osgood & Company, 1871.

IsaogluHande. "A Freudian psychoanalytic Analysis of Nathaniel Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter", Istanbul Aydin University, Winter 2015

Gabriela Castillo, Freddy Jaramillo. "Elements of Contrast in Nathaniel Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter". Universidad De Cuenca, 2012

KaddourAbdelhalim. "The Notion of Sin in Nathaniel Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter", University Oran 2 Mohamed Ben Ahmed, 2017.

KahhouImene. "Puritanical Dimensions in The Scarlet Letter: Moral Demands Versus Individual Needs". Mohamed Khider University Biskra, 2011.

Lehtie Chalise Thomson. "A Moral Wilderness: The Scarlet Letter". Boise State University, December 2011

Long, William J. "Outlines of English and American Literature". Summerville: Forgotten Books, 2008.

Lundin, Roger, and Anthony C. Thiselton, et al. "The Promise of Hermeneutics", Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999.

Mills, Barriss. "Hawthorne and Puritanism". The New England Quarterly 21.1 (1948): 78-102. Print.

Morgan, Edmund S. "Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea". New York: Cornell UP, 1963. Print.

Praz Mario. "The Romantic Agony". Oxford University Press, 13, April 1978.

Poe Elizabeth. "A Teacher's Guide To The Signet Classic Edition Of Nathaniel Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter", 1 January 1991.

Ruland, Richard, and Malcolm Bradbury. "From Puritanism to Postmodernism: a History of American Literature". New York: Penguin Books, 1991.

The Audiopedia. "What is Dark Romanticism? What Does Dark Romanticism mean? Dark Romanticism meaning". Online video clip. 17, September 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m1o-OExzkL0>.

Thoreau, Henry David. "Civil Disobedience". New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 2003.

"Transcendentalismhttps". Encyclopaedia Britannica, Encyclopaedia Britannica, inc

www.britannica.com/event/Transcendentalism-American-movement.

Zaheer Ahmad. "Hester Prynne as a Rebel to Puritan Society in Hawthorne's Romance the Scarlet Letter". The University of Lahore Chenab Campus, Pakistan, 2015.

ملخص

لقد تم معالجة أخلاقيات البيوريتانفيا يتعلق بقصة هوثورن الرومانسية *The Scarlet Letter* "الحرف القرمزي". تدور أحداث الرواية حول امرأة من العامة هستر برين والقس آرثر ديميسدايل الذين تم حصرهما في نطاق بيئة اجتماعية ثقافية تتميز بالإعتماد المطلق على عقيدة الخطيئة والطبيعة الفاسدة للإنسان الذي خلاصه منها لا يمكن أن يكون إلا من خلال إعتناق معتقدات الخلاص الصارمة للمبادئ البيوريتانية. وقد تناول هوثورن عناصر التناقضات والانحرافات من خلال سلوك شخصيته الرئيسية هستر برين وآرثر ديميسدايل ومن خلال ردة فعل المجتمع البيوريتاني. والواقع أن المعتقدات الأخلاقية البيوريتانية الصارمة التي كانت قائمة داخل مجتمع إنجلترا الجديدة خلقت بعض المفاهيم القابلة للنقاش والتي تتناقض مع العقيدة البيوريتانية. فمن ناحية، نرى أن المجتمع أثنى على المعتقدات البيوريتانية، ومن ناحية أخرى، أفعالهم كانت تشير إلى العكس. في هذه الدراسة يتم تحليل أهم الرموز البيوريتانية والشخصيات الرئيسية في رواية هوثورن مع ربطها بالانحراف الديني.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الانحراف الديني، المذهب البيوريتاني، الحرف القرمزي، الخلاص، الخطيئة، مجتمع إنجلترا

الجديدة، التحليل النفسي.

Résumé

L'éthique puritaine est examinée en relation avec la romance de Hawthorne la lettre écarlate. Il s'agit d'une commune Hester Prynne et un prêtre puritain Arthur Dimmesdale qui ont été mis dans un environnement socioculturel qui a consacré une dépendance absolue sur le péché et la dépravation totale de l'homme dont le salut ne pouvait être gagné qu'en adaptant les croyances puritaines strictes. Hawthorne a abordé des éléments de contradictions et de déviations à travers ses personnages principaux Hester Prynne, Arthur Dimmesdale et à travers la société puritaine. Les croyances morales puritaines strictes qui existaient dans la société de la Nouvelle-Angleterre ont créé quelques concepts discutables qui ont contredit avec la doctrine puritaine. D'une part, la société a fait l'éloge des croyances puritaines et d'autre part, ils ont fait le contraste. Dans cette étude, les principaux symboles puritains et le caractère de Hawthorne sont analysés en relation avec la déviation religieuse

Les mots clés : Déviation religieuse, doctrine puritaine, La lettre écarlate, salut, péché, société de la nouvelle Angleterre, psychanalyse.