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**LITERARY ANALYSIS OF PURITAN REFLECTIONS IN
THE SCARLET LETTER THROUGH THE SOCIOLOGICAL
APPROACH**

Thesis Submitted to Obtain the Bachelor in English

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Dedication

First, I would like to thank God for the strength and courage that He has gave me to overcome all the obstacles presented in the way to achieve this dreamed goal. I Finally, I must express my very profound gratitude to my parents Carlos Solano and Lidieth Solano for providing me with unfailing support and continuous encouragement throughout my years of study and through the process of researching and writing this thesis. They have been helping me to discover my passion and supporting me even when I did not deserve it and for loving me without conditions As well as my two older brothers, Carlos Solano Jr. and Miguel Solano; specially Miguel, for supporting me, even at the worst times and for being a true example of hard work and courage. This accomplishment would not have been possible without them. Thank you.

Abstract

The Scarlet Letter is the type of book that most people would not be interested in because of the amount of years that had passed since its publication or even because it is dull. But the implicit message that holds within is a series of aptitudes that exist till the present. The background behind it, the history, and the social-ethical values are fundamental in the understanding of this message. The main purpose is to acknowledge important aspects of the puritan society reflected on the book, as well as the overtone of the Puritanism and the development of this movement.

The convenience of knowing more about the subject is how human beings brag about the progress that has been happening through time: in a technological level and in a knowledge level. But the lack of real values, like empathy, mercy, and comprehension of the sentiments for others, have made a hard and impenetrable shield in the society. Therefore, the research question was: How did this ideology affect the life of the main characters of the *Scarlet Letter*?

Throughout the analysis of the book, it was more than impressive to find out that society back in the 1800's was not that different from today's societies all over the world. In the investigation, the way in which Nathaniel Hawthorne saw the puritan ideology is obvious: people who were hypocrites, easy to judge, vengeful, and untrue. On one hand, they were easy to judge Hester Prynne, the main character, but praising her accomplice in her "sin" Mr. Dimmesdale. Another aspect that came to light was the way in which the puritan beliefs influenced the life of every character in the book. In different ways for each through hatred, judgement, hypocrisy, sin, revenge, guilt, etc. Also, the different symbols within the book that expose the interest of Nathaniel Hawthorne for emphasizing the flaws

in the puritan society and the puritan beliefs. For example, the representation of Pearl, Hester's daughter, whom is both a symbol of death and life itself. In conclusion, this book is a masterpiece thanks to the fact that it subtly criticizes the puritan environment in which the characters lived, but emphasized the strength of the soul of the main character, Hester Prynne, to overcome all the obstacles that she had to face throughout her life on earth.

Resumen

La Letra Escarlata es el tipo de libro que la mayoría de gente consideraría aburrido debido a la cantidad de años que han transcurrido desde su primera publicación o, simplemente, porque lo consideran aburrido. Pero el mensaje oculto dentro del libro es una serie de actitudes que están presentes hasta el día de hoy. El contexto detrás del libro, la historia y los valores socialmente éticos son fundamentales para la comprensión de este mensaje. El propósito principal es reconocer los aspectos importantes de la Sociedad puritana reflejados en el libro. También, el trasfondo del Puritanismo y el desarrollo de este movimiento. La conveniencia de saber más acerca del tema es como los seres humanos se jactan del progreso que ha venido sucediendo durante los años: a nivel tecnológico y a nivel intelectual. Pero la falta de valores reales, como la empatía, la misericordia y la comprensión de los sentimientos de otros, crearon un escudo impenetrable en la sociedad. Por lo tanto, la pregunta de investigación es cómo afectó esta ideología la vida de los personajes principales en *La Letra Escarlata*. A través del análisis del libro, fue más que impresionante darse cuenta de que la sociedad en los 1800s no fue tan diferente como las sociedades del mundo hasta el día de hoy.

En la investigación, la manera en la que Nathaniel Hawthorne percibía la ideología puritana es obvia: personas que eran hipócritas, que juzgaban fácilmente, vengativas y falsas. Por un lado, la Sociedad juzgó muy rápidamente a Ester Prynne, pero por otro lado alababan a su compañero de “pecado” Mr. Dimmesdale. Otro aspecto que salió a la luz fue la manera en la que las creencias puritanas influenciaron la vida de cada personaje del libro. A cada uno de manera diferente: mediante el odio, el juicio, la hipocresía, el pecado, la venganza, la culpa, etc. También, los diferentes símbolos dentro del libro que exponen el

interés de Nathaniel Hawthorne por enfatizar las fallas de la sociedad puritana y de las creencias puritanas. Por ejemplo, la representación de Perla, la hija de Ester, quien es un símbolo de muerte y vida al mismo tiempo. En conclusión, este libro es una verdadera obra de arte, gracias a que critica sutilmente el ambiente puritano en el que vivieron los personajes, pero enfatiza la fuerza del alma del personaje principal, Ester Prynne, para superar los obstáculos que tuvo que enfrentar durante su vida en la tierra.

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Chapter I

Introductory Framework

The United States of America is one of the most influential countries in the contemporary world. Its economy, culture, literature, and language are reflected all over the globe. But what is the background of this powerful country? Long before its name was United States, a man called John Winthrop led a group of people to the new world, Massachusetts. Several ships transported people that came from England in rebellion of the Church's reform. They called themselves Puritans, because their goal was to achieve a total purity from the Catholic church and its beliefs.

As soon as they arrived in America, they had the purpose of establishing what they called a "city on a hill," an allusion and an example of purity to the rest of the world. Since then, they became the founders of New England, which was the most powerful puritan colony ever. They established their religion, their intellectual knowledges, and their social order, very deeply within their territory.

Its influence was reflected on many ways, apart from the ones mentioned before. Social values, cultural customs, and literature were aspects that were affected by this ideology. The puritan social standards were incredibly strict. For example, profanation of the Sabbath day, blasphemy, fornication, drunkenness, playing games of chance, and participation in theatrical performances were penal offenses (The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 2016, p.1). They had no mercy when it came to "sin" and they were easy to judge. Regarding literature, the authors were deeply influenced by this behavior.

One of the classics of puritan literature is *The Scarlet Letter*, that tells the story about Hester Prynne, a woman who committed adultery and was forced to wear a big red “A” in her breast as a punishment. They did not think about it when they judged Hester. A historical and social analysis of the Puritanism through *The Scarlet Letter* in Nathaniel Hawthorne’s eyes will be crucial to the investigation

1.1 Problem Statement

There are a big number of books that reflex on how life was back when puritanism was an active ideology. But few of them show it in the way *The Scarlet Letter* does. Its great impact on the perspective of the fellows, judgement, sin, and social values is the main purpose of the present investigation; as well as, the factors that made puritans to be so powerful, in every sense of the word. The value that the puritan society gave to the concept of sin is one of the main topics to be discussed on the investigation, as well as the overwhelming preference that this society had towards masculine figures. Free of all kind of flaw, temptation, converting them almost into saints, as it is reflexed in the book, laying on all the sinful weight into a woman. This would be investigated through past studies, books and online tools. So, the research question that this study will try to answer is, how did this ideology affect the life of the main characters of the *Scarlet Letter*?

Objectives of the Investigation

1.1.1. General Objective

To analyze some Puritan reflections in the *Scarlet Letter* through the Sociological Approach

1.1.2. Specific Objectives

- 1.1.2.1. To identify how the puritan morale affected the main characters in the book
- 1.1.2.2. To explain how the judgement of puritans affected Hester Prynne, the main character of *The Scarlet*
- 1.1.2.3. To evaluate how the puritan ideology had a great influence in the book *The Scarlet Letter*

1.2 Justification of the Study

The Scarlet Letter is the type of book that most people would not be interested in because of the amount of years that had passed since its publication or even because it is dull. But the implicit message that holds within is a series of aptitudes that exist till the present. The background behind it, the history, and the social-ethical values are fundamental in the understanding of this message. The main purpose is to acknowledge important aspects of the puritan society reflected on the book. Secondary, the overtone of the Puritanism and the development of this movement.

The convenience of knowing more about the subject is how human beings brag about the progress that has been happening through time: in a technological level and in a knowledge level. But the lack of real values, like empathy, mercy, and comprehension of the sentiments for others, made a hard and impenetrable shield in the society. Therefore, it is incredibly easy to make a judgement on a person's behavior, as it happened throughout the *Scarlet Letter*, with Hester Prynne: the main character. Judgement is a universal experience. Its relevancy transcends geographical, ethnical, cultural, political, and social boundaries. It does not matter whether it was a child, an adolescent, or an elderly person.

Hence, it is a subject that most people had experimented, one way or another. Everybody had suffered the bitter taste of judgement. It could affect all types of people in two different ways: take the judgement of others as an excuse to have a wrong perception of oneself and feel miserable or using it as a boost to impulse the desire to become better every day. To understand the relation between Hester Prynne, her environment, and her role in society, it is necessary to know a pinch of the wide history of puritans and the great journey that brought them and built them to be as influential as they were.

In the book, we can see a scene where Hester Prynne is suffering hardly for her mistake, through the judgement of the townspeople. But what they did not know was the fact that they, as the prosecutors, were suffering too for their attitude towards her. They were suffering silently the guilt of hypocrisy. It is truth that the sin that Hester committed was “morally” incorrect, but she had the courage to acknowledge her flaw and to face the consequences of it, no matter what they were.

As it is seen, a judgmental behavior not only affects the person directly; in this case, Hester Prynne, but also it has a repercussion in her prosecutors. They would never have the courage that it takes to admit sin and to meekly accept such a harsh discipline. Discipline is a word that is usually misunderstood. A healthy discipline is indispensable for a neat life, neat health, and good habits. But when it is converted into a sickly desire of overcontrolling a behavior or a person, it starts to get painful and harmful. And that is not all, there were village people who thought that Hester deserved a worse punishment. As it can be seen in the book in chapter 2, line 5 when a woman in the crowd said that “At the very least, they should have put the brand of a hot iron on Hester Prynne's forehead.” Puritan society was too severe and exaggerated.

1.3 Antecedents

It is not a secret that throughout the years, human beings have tried to achieve a successful connection with a supreme entity named God. Since the separation in Eden Garden, humans have struggled to find a way to communicate with God. This is an important point to mention, as this is the starting point of the Puritanism movement, five centuries ago in England.

A research paper made by Vanden (2018) says that this movement started to grow indirectly when King Henry VIII separated from the Pope, because he did not want to annulate his divorce with Catherine of Aragon. That is why Henry established the Church of England. This church eliminated several of the rules established by the Pope and acquired doctrines that were taken from the Reformation. Reason why a group of people that called themselves “Puritans” appeared. They thought the England Church needed a much deeper purification and that all types of sin had to be punished, severely. As a result, they migrated to North America, settled there, and founded the first colony.

An essay made by David Littlefield and Rachel Sara (n.d.) called *The Scarlet Letter: A Critical Review* states that sin is deeply rooted to human beings, since the beginning of time. Sin in the *Scarlet Letter* is the gasoline to the massive explosion of intolerance toward Hester Prynne. Even though, this symbol was made for punishing her and making her a miserable person, it provoked totally the opposite effect. Hester’s eyes were opened to a new reality: as an outsider, she saw puritanism as the imprisonment it was, and she was set free from the chains of feminine role model and the proper social standards of that society. A situation that had the authority to destroy her roundly, converted her into a strong woman; a revolutionary woman.

Regarding what judgment and judgmental behavior really is, Henriques (2013) says that to make a judgement is okay. It is a normal response of the brain, because humans are social beings, constantly seeing the actions of the people, and the environment. The problem starts when a person begins to overdo it; to be extremely critical about others. When the person or group of people start to make harmful and unhelpful comments, it is a signal that shows that something is not right. The sickly judgment made by the townspeople towards Hester Prynne, showed nothing else, but a deep and profound desire to redeem their own sins through her (an allusion to Jesus Christ's sacrifice). They were not brave enough to accept their obvious sinful nature, but as Hester's sin was visible, they did not hesitate to condemn her.

Another study was carried out by Smith (2011) and it talks about the effect of puritanism in modern America. It states that the great influence of puritans is still reflexed in social, political, and religious issues. Even though, they disappeared from America a long time ago, through literature, some authors like John Winthrop and William Rogers, the essence of this fascinating ideology still influences every aspect of life. In addition, freedom and the occupation of God and religion are still deeply rooted. It continues saying that John Winthrop's diary is of utmost importance in the debates of how the government should manage moral liberty. Moreover, he states that there are two types of freedom: natural and civil. A statement that it was questionable in his time, as well as it is in the present. An article published by The New York Times (2016) affirms that Alexis de Tocqueville (1830), a French political thinker said, "I can see the whole destiny of America contained in the first Puritan who landed on those shores", when he first visited the United States. Several studies show that Americans reflect puritan traditions in the way they work. And not only there, but also in the way they see God: that a person is predestinated to be

saved by God, the belief of heaven and hell, salvation and achieving redemption through effort). These reflects the big amount of puritanism that it is seen five centuries later.

1.4 Scope

This investigation will begin with the study of the puritan movement since the beginning, the impact that it had on Nathaniel Hawthorne, through his novel *The Scarlet Letter*, and moral values, liberty, all the manifestations of sin, judgement and historical facts will be taken into count to have a clear vision of the mark that puritanism left in the world. The main goal to achieve is to understand the great impact of puritan literature, their moral values and the perceptions through the eyes of the main characters of *The Scarlet Letter*, and the different puritan reflections through the Sociological approach within the book.

Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

This chapter will explain briefly the life of the author of the novel in which the investigation is based on. Nathaniel Hawthorne's life will help to understand the strong presence of puritan reflections within *The Scarlet Letter*, and how connected his life was with the life of the characters of the book. Also, a summary of the novel's plot will be developed, hand by hand with the analysis of puritan lifestyle. Next, it will be carried out a deep review of the approach chosen for the investigation, which in this case is a sociological approach, as well as an explanation of the puritanism as an ideology. *The Scarlet Letter* will be reviewed through the eye of theories such as puritan judgment, the way they viewed sin, and male chauvinism, to have a clear understanding of the behavior manifested in the characters in the book.

2.1 Biography of the Author

Nathaniel Hawthorne was born in Salem, Massachusetts in 1804. His most famous books were *The Scarlet Letter* and *The House of the Seven Gables*, as well as other short stories such as *Young Goodman Brown*. In which the major factor that influenced his literature pieces was Puritanism. Among his ancestors, there was a man called William Hathorne, who was one of the first-generation migrators from England to the "New World". Ms. William was also known for being a tough judge, with no mercy. He also was the progenitor of John Hathorne, one of the three judges that in charge of the Salem Trials back in the 1690s.

This event led Nathaniel to add an extra “w” to his last name, because he did not want to be associated with that specific part of the family. He used to be a surveyor in the Salem Custom House. However, he got fired for politic favoritism. Thanks to this situation, Nathaniel Hawthorne started writing down his most famous book: *The Scarlet Letter* (Nathaniel Hawthorne, 1850)

Full of Puritan Laws and fundamentals, this book made him famous and had a wide distribution all over the United States. As it is reflexed in almost all his books, Hawthorne believed that the puritanism was an oppressive movement, unreasonably strict, and completely hypocritical. He grew up fully into the puritan era and this was expressed in his literature works. Hawthorne thought that the puritan society was just a bunch of people trying to save the outside look of supposed perfection, and completely rotten on the inside. He did not share the puritan way of seeing the sin. Nathaniel Hawthorne had the perception of sin as something that relayed within human nature. Therefore, he disagreed a lot with the era in which he lived (Britannica, n.d.)

2.2 Plot

The book starts with a wide explanation about the prison building of a puritan colony in the 17th Century in Boston, Massachusetts. The narrator details the shapes and forms that conformed together this great building and the contrast within that dark place and the rosebush that grew in the front of this horrible place, as an irony about the hope that the ones condemn to live in that place for a long time can have regardless their condition.

After this moral lesson, the story continues with a woman called Hester Prynne holding a baby in her arms and walking through a platform. Step by step, she was being examined by the judgmental, severe, and critical eyes of the puritan townspeople. A group

of old women from the colony, gossiped about the big, scarlet letter that hung from her chest; the letter “A” that stood for Adulterer, which was the reason why she was being publicly judged. While Hester was there, in the scaffold, she started to remind her childhood, she had a vision of her parents next to her old house in the countryside of England, as well as the memory of a shadow that stared at her through a mirror, his husband, an old businessman of Europe. While thinking about these memories, Hester felt an overwhelming nostalgia and her instinct was to hold her baby tight, as an act of protection. Simultaneously, she started to think about how dark and shadowy their future seemed to be.

As she was standing in front of the crowd, she recognized an old face. The old man that she was married to. The man that she thought that was dead. The same but different, his clothes, his face, his eyes were changed. This mysterious man made a signal to Hester of silence. After this, the man asked about what and why was the young woman punished for, as he explained that he did not know about the incidents because he was held by the Natives for a long time. The other person answered that this woman was supposedly married to an Englishman who sent her to New England, as he needed to finish some business in Europe and then he would surely travel to meet her in the new world. He never joined Hester again. The mysterious man stated that it was absurd to think that a young lady like her could be happily married.

Finally, the mysterious man asked about the name of the little baby’s father. Apparently, Hester did not tell anybody the identity of her partner. The townsman told the mysterious man that Hester was condemned to carry that horrible symbol in her chest forever. After this, the most important men of the town appeared in the scene to judge

Hester: Reverend Wilson, Governor Bellingham, and Reverend Dimmesdale. The last one was the town's favorite preacher. For his good testimony and divine rhetoric, he was is the one in charge of persuading Hester Prynne to confess the name of the creature's father, stating that the man's identity should be known by everyone and that she must not feel any type of compassion toward the man.

Hester maintained that she would never reveal that information to anybody, so Mr. Dimmesdale did not insist. Reverend Wilson continued with a raw sermon about sin, and repeatedly emphasizing the letter "A" in Hester's chest as a symbol with mystical power that burned to the eyes of the big crowd that stared fixedly to it. After the sermon finished, Hester returned to jail. After a while, the mysterious man showed up at her cell. His name was Roger Chillingworth, he pretended to be a doctor. Hester's nerves were on top, so Chillingworth offered her a cup of a weird medicine. She doubted to take it, because she suspected that it was a poisonous substance. Chillingworth firmly denied that theory and told Hester that he wanted her to live in order to get his vengeance. He started to question how stupid he was for believing that a woman like her, could ever be happy with a man like him, ugly, misshapen, and old. Also, Chillingworth started to push Hester to reveal the name of the father of the creature. Hester responded that she would never open her mouth to reveal such information ever. Chillingworth then, promised Hester to never reveal his identity to nobody, and asked her to keep the secret, as well.

The conversation ended with the firm thought of Chillingworth of not resting till he found out the identity of Hester's partner in crime. After this intense conversation, time passed by and Hester was finally released from jail. The start of a whole new different life awaited, but she decided to stay in town, with her daughter. She became an outcast, a living

example for everyone else of the worst side of the human heart, a personification of sin, and even a messenger of the devil.

Hester had to live in an old house, away from the village and she survived thanks to the great ability that she had with the needle. She confectioned pieces that were so delicate and beautiful, that even Governor Willingham and the most important people in town worn them, even though Hester hands were the ones who made them. All the biggest events in town were decorated with Hester's confections. Apart from one: the wedding gowns. The puritan believed that such a holy event should never be adorned with products with a filthy background. Even though, Hester was doing "good," she usually felt sad, lonely, and unworthy of love and affection. She never received a gesture of sympathy, and this just for a mistake that any other person could commit. To alleviate the heavy head above her shoulders, Hester decided to be kind with people. She helped the poor, the needed (even more than her), and in exchange for these charity actions, she received bad looks, long stares to the scarlet letter in her chest, and scorn from the people she was trying to help.

The next chapter is all about Pearl, Hester's little girl. She was her one and only source of happiness and hope. The narrator gave a wide explanation about all Pearl's characteristics. She was the three-year-old daughter of Hester Prynne and had a very rare beauty within her. The narrator explained why Hester called her Pearl, because she "obtained" her paying a high price with all what she had. Therefore, Pearl was her only treasure and the most valuable. Men had condemned Hester with a stigma that would last forever, the scarlet letter, that evil symbol that doomed her to be hated by everyone, but nature as God gave her Pearl, a charming child, who had the power to reconcile her with

herself, and at the same time, Pearl was the key for Hester to aspire to see heaven one day, when the day came.

The only thing that worried Hester about Pearl was the fact that she could not undergo the fixed laws established by the puritan society in which she lived. Hester tried to educate her according to the puritan manners, strict, firm, but it did not work at all with Pearl. She had a savage soul and passionate impulses. When the two of them went to town, Pearl knew that she was different from the other children. They tended to be cruel with her, but she responded with noises that sounded like demoniac voices; which was one of the reasons why the townspeople believed that Pearl was a demon child.

She was labeled as the product of an infamous sin, and this was reflected whenever Hester tried to talk to her about God, about her Heavenly Father who loved her. Pearl explicitly told her mother that she had NO heavenly father. To fulfill her lack of company, Pearl used to create an endless number of imaginary characters and she used to play with them at times. One of the things that scared Hester the most about Pearl, was that the child had a strange fascination for the scarlet letter that hung out of her chest. Every time she saw it, she smiled in a very macabre way. In addition, she always asked Hester why she had that hanging in her chest. The narrator added that sometimes Hester thought that Pearl was actually a demon child, as everyone else thought.

The following chapter narrates Hester's visit to governor Bellingham's house. She dressed Pearl with a scarlet little pretty dress, made specially for her. On their way, Pearl fought with a group of children that were disturbing her and her mother, and that were throwing mug at them. Hester's initial purpose was to deliver a pair of gloves that he needed for an official ceremony, but she also wanted to ask the Governor about some

rumors that said that they wanted to take Pearl away from her, as she was supposedly a possessed child, and that it was for the “good” of Hester. However, they also were thinking that if Pearl was indeed a normal child, she must be taken away from Hester for Pearl’s sake. Hester was “incapable” of raising a creature with her antecedents.

After this, the narrator gave a full description of the Governor’s mansion, its great British style, the numerous rewards won by the Governor in battles against the native Americans, etc. There was a point where Hester was able to see herself reflected in a mirror, she looked at herself with horror, because apparently, the scarlet letter shone bright in a very diabolic way. Pearl started to cry because she wanted a rose from the Governor’s garden, but Hester tried to shush her for they could hear voices coming. Those voices belonged to the most important men in town: John Wilson, Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale, Roger Chillingworth, and the Governor, of course. When the four men looked at that little scarlet dot in the room, they could not help admiring her peculiar beauty and her strange personality. Mr. Wilson asked her who she was, if she was a Christian child or an elf, of those who they thought they left back in England. She responded that she was her mother’s daughter and that her name was Pearl.

Mr. Wilson tried to touch Pearl’s cheek unsuccessfully, and they started to talk with each other about Hester. They went to the other room and they started to ask Hester why she was worthy of keeping the child and raised her by herself, even though she was a sinner. Hester answered that she would use this shameful experience and the scarlet letter to guide Pearl into not committing the same mistakes that she did. The puritan men did not trust Hester at all. Mr. Wilson tried to tease Pearl with the basic knowledge about the Christian instruction that a child her age should have. Pearl told the man that she was

created by nobody, that her mother picked her up from the rose plant that grew next to the prison's door. The Governor reacted with horror to the girl's words and he expressed that there was no need to go further with the discussion. Hester immediately hold Pearl very close to her with a ferocious expression in her eyes. Pearl was the light to her soul, the only treasure that she had in the world and she would defend her to death. Hester responded that God was the one that gave Pearl to her and that she would take care of her because she was the personification of the scarlet letter herself.

In an act of desperation, Hester cried for the help of Reverend Dimmesdale, advocating to the fact that he had been her spiritual guide and that he knew her better than those men. Mr. Dimmesdale in a nervous tone, started to tell the men that Hester needed Pearl because she was is the only way Hester would not suffer the death of her soul in hell. Mr. Bellingham and Mr. Wilson let Hester take the child with her. Pearl approached Dimmesdale and pressed his hand to her cheek as a thankful gesture. When they were about to leave, Mrs. Hibbins, which was the governor's sister, invited Hester to a witch reunion, but she refused to go as she had to take care of Pearl. At the end of the chapter, the narrator emphasized that Pearl was the key to save Hester from "Satan's temptation."

The following chapter is a remembrance of old man Chillingworth, the thirst for revenge, and his new identity as the town's doctor. Thanks to some past studies that he had back in Europe, as well as a few tricks with curative plants; something that he learned when the natives kidnapped him and thus, he had to live with them for a while. He soon became a valuable figure within the puritan society of that time. That was why Chillingworth met Reverend Dimmesdale. Chillingworth chose him to be his spiritual guide and, at that time, Dimmesdale became very sick. So, the coincidence was nothing more than marvelous.

The narrator gave a brief explanation of Dimmesdale's studies. He graduated from Oxford University and was considered, to eyes of his followers, a true apostle consecrated to help people and behave almost like a saint. The second issue that the narrator emphasized, was the decay of the Reverend. It was something quite noticeable for everybody in town, but they thought that his paled cheeks were product of the intense jealousy with the one he studied the scriptures or maybe how prolix he executed the religious duties (fasts). Others just thought that Reverend Dimmesdale's death would mean that he was just so "holy" that the earth was not worthy of being stepped by him. But despite all the rumors, the truth was that Mr. Dimmesdale was sadder than usual. His voice had a decay tone and a subtle hint: he took his hand straight to his chest, as a gesture of pain. That is how Chillingworth and Dimmesdale started to partially spend time together.

At the beginning, Mr. Dimmesdale did not want to receive any type of treatment, but Roger Chillingworth was very insistent. It was bizarre for Chillingworth that a man like Mr. Dimmesdale expressed that he was not interested in marrying any of the young ladies of the town, so Chillingworth started to slowly approach him. Dimmesdale was a very sensitive and imaginative person, which gave a Chillingworth a hint to release all the secrets within the heart of the beloved priest. As time passed by, the two men started to live together, in the house of a merciful widow.

Mr. Dimmesdale's bedroom was covered with representations of the history of David and Bathsheba, as well as the prophet Nathan in the biblical tale, deformed by vivid colors and strange figures. As time passed by, the townspeople started to realize that Chillingworth countenance changed and transformed into something evil and dark. They even thought that he was a devil's emissary to tempt the poor life of Reverend Dimmesdale.

Chillingworth biggest obsession was Dimmesdale. Therefore, his one and only task was to investigate each, and every secret hidden within the Reverend's soul. Mr. Dimmesdale did not trust nobody. One day, they heard a scream that came from outside, the little Pearl was dancing around her mother, and when she saw the men, she started to yell that they had to run away, because "The Black Man" already took control of Mr. Dimmesdale.

Then, they started to discuss ~~about~~ the fact that Hester Prynne exposed her sin to everyone, which produced a strange reaction in Dimmesdale, so Chillingworth started to ask the Reverend about the status of his spiritual life. Dimmesdale agitated and told ~~tells~~ Chillingworth that it was-that is something that only God knew. Roger Chillingworth started to suspect that Hester and Dimmesdale were related in some way; but after this encounter, a few days later, Dimmesdale apologized with the doctor for his awful behavior and they reconciled. One night, Chillingworth decided to enter Dimmesdale's room, while he was sleeping and striped his torso to find out what he was looking for.

In the following chapter, the narrator started to talk about Chillingworth temperament. It was stated that he used to be a kind-hearted, calm, honest, and pure man in the way he treated people. But in the present, he became obsessed with finding the truth identity of the man that dishonored his name to such a point. He started to scrutinize poor Mr. Dimmesdale with such an effort, that Chillingworth did not have peace in his heart throughout this awful process. Sometimes even, his eyes changed, and flames appeared, similar to a diabolic bonfire. Mr. Dimmesdale, occasionally, suspected that some type of evil force was trying to interpose in his faith path, but he chose to ignore feelings and continued suffering the endless martyrdom of guilt.

The guilt that the man was feeling, made him more aware of the human pain and it made him aware of the possible struggles that his congregation had, and as a result, his sermons become more and more powerful. Dimmesdale thought about the possibility of confessing his sin to everybody, he constantly said that he was no more than a lie and a profanation, but he immediately discarded that possibility. This heavy weight of guilt above his shoulders resulted in a series of misfortunes as seeing weird and strange visions, and not being able to sleep at night.

Dimmesdale used to see diabolic figures laughing at him and inviting him to follow them, as well as one vision in particular when he saw Hester and Pearl with her scarlet suit and the little girl was pointing out with her index finger her mother's chest and then his chest. After these visions, he was constantly thinking about how hypocrite and fake he was. Then, he started to harm himself physically, fasted, and started to get delusional, and finally, he decided to stay up all night in the scaffold, the place where Hester Prynne was judged a few years ago. He started to yell in a very acute manner that there was no remedy, he wanted the people to know his sin, but nobody woke up from their dream. He saw a light, the person behinds the light was Reverend Wilson, but he passed by because he thought that it was a witch. Dimmesdale started to ramble what could happen if the townspeople realized his true self, his horrible sin. This thought made him laugh, and his laugh was accompanied by Pearl's laugh.

Dimmesdale invited Hester and Pearl to be with him in the scaffold. The three of them formed an "electric chain." As they were laying there, Pearl asked Mr. Dimmesdale if he could be right there with her mom and her the next day at noon. He responded that he was going to be there with them another day, not tomorrow. The girl laughed and asked

which other day, “the day of the Final Judgement,” he responded. When there were not more words, the three of them just stayed there for a moment, and suddenly the sky started to shine brighter and weirder than ever, and as a magical symbol, a bright scarlet letter “A” drawn to the sight three people interlaced by something greater than destiny. After a moment, Pearl pointed out at the old Chillingworth, staring at the three of them with a malicious expression. Dimmesdale told Hester that he hated that man so much. The doctor took Dimmesdale with him after a while.

The next day, Dimmesdale preached a sermon that was considered as the strongest and most powerful; since thanks to it, the people felt regenerated. Later the sacristan lent him a black glove that was found on the scaffold in the morning. Dimmesdale affirmed that he did not remember anything from last night. So, the sacristan told him that yesterday at night, a big red-letter A appeared in the sky and that they interpreted as an “Angel.”

The next chapter starts with Hester realizing how haggard Dimmesdale was and the necessity that she felt of doing justice for him. Hester became a very influential figure in society. She used to help others; she was more willing to love than to hate the people that made her so wrong. Therefore, there was not a soul with the same good will and with the passion to help other, despite her shortage resources. The entire society started to see the horrible emblem not as “adulterer,” but as “able.” Although in public, the people that Hester used to help, ignored her, for a matter of pride accompanied with lots of hypocrisy. And in regards of the scarlet letter, it became what the rosary beads were for a nun. The narrator started to talk about the role of women in the puritan society, usually lagged, but able to flourish from the ashes like Hester did.

One day Hester and a seven-year-old Pearl took a walk near the sea's shore. Pearl started to pick up shells and seaweed. Moreover, Hester finally decided to confront Chillingworth and told him to stop torturing poor Mr. Dimmesdale. She told the doctor that the time had come for her to reveal his identity. It was obvious that Chillingworth already knew that Dimmesdale was Hester's partner in crime. While they were talking, Hester could not even recognize Chillingworth's face, it was very changed. The peaceful expression was replaced by an anxious, scrutinizing ferociously, trying to find something, but disguised behind a smile.

The doctor was nothing, but a true example of the capacity of men to become demons. His thirst for revenge took position of every single part of his soul. Chillingworth, himself, acknowledged the fact that he was completely changed and deformed into an evil creature. So, they both started to have a flashback on the old times when he was a different type of man. Hester begged him to stop torturing Dimmesdale, to which he responded that he could not do it, because it was his reason to live. The conversation stopped. Hester walked towards Pearl and realized how much she hated Roger Chillingworth and how fool she was of thinking that she was once in love with such a man. It was just a delusion.

When she found Pearl, the girl had a very peculiar symbol on her chest made of sea moss: the letter "A." Both started to argue about the meaning of the letter and Pearl related it with Mr. Dimmesdale's weird habit of touching his chest and making a pain face. This revelation left Hester dismayed, as Pearl was just a little girl. For this reason, she decided not to tell her the true meaning of the scarlet letter, yet.

In the following chapter, Hester approached Mr. Dimmesdale in the forest to reveal Chillingworth's true identity. Hester always thought about talking to him in the daylight

and by any chance between four walls. Pearl went with her mom, and curiously, she noticed that wherever Hester went, the light of the sun “escaped” from the place. Pearl asked Hester about “The Black Man,” a character that a lady said that had a very deep connection with Hester’s scarlet letter; apparently, this letter was the Black Man’s mark for Hester. They overheard steps in the forest, and Pearl warned her mother that the Black Man was coming towards them, but Hester knew that it was Dimmesdale and started to drive Pearl away to talk with him in on private. Pearl went but not before telling her mother that she suspected that the Reverend had a mark similar to her in his chest. Right there, Hester and Dimmesdale met in the forest and everything seemed to be just fine. This was the only place where they could be themselves in every way. They held each other’s hands, sat down near to a creek, and talked. Hester took the courage to reveal the identity of Chillingworth (Hester’s old husband).

At the beginning, Reverend Dimmesdale panicked and got mad to Hester. He blamed her for all the suffering he had experimented for a long time. As a result, she was speechless. The only act that she could do was do get Dimmesdale’s face towards the letter on her chest and started to moan. Eventually, both acknowledged the fact that the doctor was a worse person than they were. Therefore, fear started to wander through Dimmesdale’s body, because he was scared that the doctor could tell everybody. Nonetheless, Hester calmed him down by affirming him that he would not say a word.

The chapter ended with Hester convincing him that they could go to can rebuilt a new live back in Europe and live a new life (Hester, Dimmesdale, and Pearl as a family). They agreed to escape in a ship and Dimmesdale renewed in an instant. In this rapture of joy and happiness, Hester threw the horrible symbol away from her chest, which made her

feel completely beautiful. Even her appearance changed. Pearl came back, and Dimmesdale asked Hester if she would ever see him as a good father, to which she responded that he was going to be the best father ever. Pearl freaked out because she did not recognize her mother. As Pearl walked towards the two proud parents, an overwhelming feeling attacked Mr. Dimmesdale. Hester, herself, had the bond that joined their lives very deeply within each other. Hester asked Pearl to join them plenty of times, but the little girl was scared because her mother was not wearing the horrible symbol in her chest.

Finally, Hester put the letter back on and Pearl kissed her. Hester asked Pearl to give Dimmesdale a kiss and she asked if the Reverend would hold their hands publicly one day. As Dimmesdale's response was negative, Pearl refused to kiss him. Arthur Dimmesdale was the first to leave. He could not believe what happened and just to confirm that it was not a dream, he turned back and saw Hester, next to a dead tree full of moss and his little Pearl, dancing around the rivulet. He was still a bit confused and overwhelmed about the situation, but to get those thoughts away from him, he started thinking about the "escape plan" that Hester and him passionately built; the European cities would offer a great chance to leave their past behind, a whole new life. They planned to leave in a vessel that was going to Bristol, England and that was going to sail in three days.

Hester's charities putted her in contact with the captain of the big boat and asked him to be totally confidential. The timing was perfect, it was enough to pack all of their belongings and undertake the journey to a whole new life. In three days also, the Reverend was in charge of preaching the Election Sermon. There was nothing more honorable than that. When he arrived at the town, everything seemed to be exactly the same, but he was the one who went inside the forest being one person and came back as a another. He let his

“sinful” nature to take over his inside. For example, he ran into an old deacon of the church, who was well instructed in religious topics. The two men started a conversation and suddenly, an awful lot of heresies passed by through Dimmesdale’s mind.

He started to freak out over those strange thoughts, until the next one came on. As he was rushing away from the old man, he bumped into the eldest member of his church, an old poor, and lonely widow, who thanked him for finding true happiness in the Bible and in God. When they were talking, the Reverend was not able to remember any verse of the Holy Gospel, which made him panic even more than before.

The last incident happened with the youngest of his followers. The most tender pure creature, who was completely in love with him. An evil voice within him whispered that he should look at her with a perverse eye, but as the maid walked toward him closer, he hid his face and ran as fast as he could. The last temptation that he experimented that day was to show some puritan children that were playing in the street, a series of the most vain and vulgar words that he knew. As he arrived at his house, he started to see his lovely Bible in the desk and an uncomplete sermon. He then, had a brief talk with Chillingworth and told him that he was no longer in need of his medicines. After that, he burnt the old sermon that he had written and started a whole new one.

Early in the morning of the next day, Hester and Pearl went to the marketplace, because it was going to be decided who was the new governor of the colony. The splendor and finesse of the celebration was just beautiful. The entire town gathered there, as well as Native-Americans and sailors; even, the captain of the ship in which Hester was going to go away and all of his crew. The tradition was to carry out a parade with all the influential people in town throughout the street, directly to the church where the sermon was going to

be preached. As Pearl and Hester were waiting for the parade to start, the child asked Hester if the reverend was going to hold their hands in front of everybody. Hester was is not able to respond because she felt that something was not right and as these thoughts were going through her mind, one of the sailors that was close to her, said that Roger Chillingworth was going to join them in the ship, because he offered his medical services to the captain. Hester started to look desperately for the old doctor and found him looking at her with a macabre smile on his face.

The parades started immediately after this incident; therefore, Hester was not able to react. First, the marching band compound by plenty of instruments displayed a beautiful honorable vibe. Second, a group of soldiers with their armaments. Third, the towns' fathers showed up in the parade. They all seemed to be full of wisdom, respect, brilliancy, and power. Right after, it came Reverend Dimmesdale looking healthier and happier than ever. So different that not even Pearl recognized him. She wanted to approach the man and give him a kiss, but Hester stopped her. Dimmesdale looked as unreachable as ever to Hester and this feeling that overcome her made her feel blue.

As the Reverend passed by, Mistress Hibbins (Governor Bellingham's sister) approached Hester and told her that she knew that she and Dimmesdale had the mark of the Black Man; in other words, the devil. She then suggested that the devil himself was Pearl's father and invited her to join her someday to a walk into the forest, to show her witchcraft. It was acknowledged soon that Mistress Hibbins was going to be condemned and murdered for being a witch. After the conversation, Hester sat in the scaffold to hear Dimmesdale's preach. She realized that almost everybody was staring at her breast. Pearl approached her to tell her that the captain told her that Chillingworth was going to be in charge of Mr.

Dimmesdale and that she only would have to worry about herself and Pearl. The news discouraged Hester a lot, and she did not see a way of solving the problem.

The ministers preach was catalogued as one of the wisest and saint speeches that a man could ever give. It was about the relationship between divinity and humankind. His words were like fire to the people and the environment that surrounded the church was almost divine. After he finished the sermon, all the crowd proceed to the town's hall to celebrate with a feast. As he came out of the church, he approached Hester and Pearl and the three of them got on the scaffold. Chillingworth tried to stop him from doing that, but his efforts were useless.

Once there, the preacher that a few moments ago was considered an angel, opened his mouth to tell the truth to the world. He told the people that he finally was where he should have been, seven years ago, with Hester and their baby girl. He yelled that the scarlet letter in Hester's chest throughout the years, was his too. He acknowledged that he tried to hide it from the people, but he could not hide it from God, the angels, and the devil himself, who constantly touched it. He ripped his gown, he revealed his chest to everyone, and an "A" formed in his chest. The old doctor screamed out and mourned by saying that revenge escaped from him, as Dimmesdale revealed his sin. Then, the Reverend collapsed in the scaffold's floor and Hester took his head and puts it close to her chest and demanded Pearl to give him a kiss. The little girl approached him, kissed his mouth, and started to cry over his father's head. Finally, Dimmesdale talked to Hester, she asked him if they would live together in the afterlife, to which he responded that the sin that they both committed was too severe and that he did not know what was going to happen. After this, he died.

The last chapter of the book talks about several of the versions that emerged after seeing the scarlet letter on the minister's chest. Some people thought that it was caused by torture, other thought that it was Chillingworth's poisonous medicines, and others said that they never saw anything in his chest: he was just "teaching" them that even the most holly man could make a mistake. Then, the narrator told that Chillingworth died one year after Dimmesdale and he inherited Pearl all his possessions and money.

Regarding Hester and Pearl, they both disappeared from the town and in their absence, the tragic history became a legend. After a while, Hester was seeing again in town. She continued to do charities and lived alone. (The narrator suggested that Pearl stayed in Europe and got married with a wealthy young man). At the end of her days, Hester was ~~is~~ buried next to Dimmesdale's grave. They shared the same gravestone, which had a very peculiar and life changing stigma: a big letter "A."

2.3 Sociological Approach

2.3.1 Definition

The sociological approach is deeply related with sociology, which is the study of society and the human social life, according to Lumen (n.d.). Therefore, it is bonded to the author and the context of the literary piece that belongs to this specific author. The sociological approach examines the connection existent between the position of the author in society and the role of the author in the specific society that, in this case, Nathaniel Hawthorne, used to comply within it.

2.3.2 Nathaniel Hawthorne and the Sociological Approach in *The Scarlet*

Letter

There are several hints of this approach in *The Scarlet Letter*. During the time that Hawthorne decided to write this book, he was going through a dismissal from his old job as a Customs House official. He decided then, to start writing, and thanks to the success that *The Scarlet Letter* reached, he became famous; an analogy of what happened to Hester Prynne in the book, but the opposite way, as Hester was married to a businessman in Europe, and she travelled to New England, her life changed completely for the worse. She made a mistake, got pregnant, and she was stigmatized as an adulteress for the rest of her life. She lost her reputation, her dignity, and she left behind the old days when she did not lack almost anything.

Hawthorne's first job was at a governmental institution and after seeing himself free from that job, it was a "sign" for him to start his creational career as a writer. This freedom is reflected in the book also. For Hester, the government was the society and the townspeople that rejected her and sent her to an "exile." But unconsciously, they set her free from all the little thinking that a woman was able to have back in those days. Hester became a revolutionary woman, as she fought for her rights to be a mother; and despite the fact that she sinned, she acted with kindness and mercy towards her accusers, even though they still treated her wrong. This can also be seen through Reverend Dimmesdale's eyes. The relevant religious figures of that time were similar to saints, angels, creatures of the light, without flaws and without the capability of understanding the sinners. But thanks to the huge failure that he committed, Mr. Dimmesdale became more aware of the human

nature of sin, and he started to preach the most relevant and touching sermons of all his career.

During the time in which Hawthorne lived, there was a specific part of society that was called “The Jacksonians,” who, according to the Dictionary.com was a “movement leaded by the President Andrew Jackson, who championed greater rights for the common man and was opposed to any sign of aristocracy in the nation.” Hawthorne’s focus was not completely on the criticism of unequal social classes, but he showed favoritism for Hester’s life. She was the representation of the needed, poor, working class versus the wealthy leaders of Boston, who were implacable with her. Since the beginning of the book, it is obvious the struggle between Hester Prynne and the society she lived in. When her sin was publicly exposed, and she was forced to use the dark emblem on her chest, she was isolated and was seen as an outcast. This event changed her life forever and placed her at the bottom of the social pyramid. Contrary to what should have happened, she overcame these obstacles and transformed herself into a woman of good. Along her journey of becoming a “legend,” Hester’s spot in society, kept getting better, until the day that she died, when she was buried in the same spot where the most important people of town were, including the town fathers. Hawthorne make visible the fact that a big differentiation of classes is deeply tied to the dehumanization of individuals. Mercy, help, and protection were almost inexistent towards Hester, when she needed it the most.

Another character that reflects Hawthorne’s beliefs towards the society in which he lived is Arthur Dimmesdale, Hester’s lover. The favoritism shown towards him and the terrible guilt that wrapped him up and led him to death, was a product of the severeness the society that its only purpose was to make conflicts and put a heavy weight on a person’s

shoulders just because of their social status. (Economical/ Sociological Aspects in *The Scarlet Letter*, 2013).

2.3.3 Principles

The main principles of this specific approach would be the culture of the society in which the book was written standards of behavior, etiquette, the relations between opposing groups: the rich and the poor, men and women, religious beliefs, taboos, and moral values (Maryland, n.d.). Also, the economic and the political situation of the society, are two important principles that are taken into consideration on the sociological analysis. The way in which the power is managed and the amount of money and riches that were handled, as well.

2.3.4 Exponents

One of the most recognized exponents of this approach was Plato; however, this approach gained popularity until the 20th century with Lucien Goldman, Leo Lowenthal, Robert Escarpit, Alan Swingwood, Diana Laurenson John Hall, Jonathan Herde, Madame de Stale, Hippolyte Taine, Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, and George Luckacs (Murlidhar, 2014), among others. As the sociological approach covers aspects such as standards of behavior, religious beliefs and moral values, the puritanism explains in great detail what these aspects were about in *The Scarlet Letter*.

2.4 Puritanism

2.4.1 Definition

The puritanism is the set of beliefs and customs that belonged to a group formed thanks to the separation of England from the Roman-Catholic church and The Vatican. The Puritans were originally from England, but they were forced to migrate, first to Holland in

1608; but after twelve years there, they travelled all the way to Massachusetts, in a ship called the Mayflower. Once there, the Puritans established a colony called Plymouth, and as the time passed by, they settled all over New England. The puritans did not accept anybody who did not had a true relationship with God, and for being part of the exclusive group, the person must show a holy lifestyle according to the scriptures. They were known for being especially strict in their punishments (Brette2013).

2.4.2 Principles

Among all the principles established by the puritans, it can be found that they thought that the righteous way to honor God was through work (Hendricks, n.d.). Every single of the ceremonies that were not included in the Bible should be executed by any means. They also thought that the priests should not wear tunics, salvation was something that God chose, only a group of people were going to be chosen for this matter, and every person had to have a personal encounter with God, individually.

They were very emphatic with the human sinful nature, as well as the predestination. They gave great importance to the study of the bible, in order to understand God's mysteries (Brette 2019). Their entire political and social system was based on religion. Puritans lacked individual freedom, since the way of thinking restricted every single area of their lives. The family was the nucleus of society, but it was fully guided by-men. They controlled every aspect of the colony. Even in their personal life and with their families. For example, it was forbidden that a man show affection to her wife in public.

Women were excluded from meetings, and of course, they did not have any participation in church activities; they were useful just for having as many children as possible. There is actually a report census that deployed names such as Patience, Silence,

Fear, Prudence, Comfort, Hopestill, and Be Fruitful (n.d.). These characteristics were thought to be the way in which a good woman had to behave.

Another important principle that the puritans had was the attendance to church, as it was mandatory. At church, there was a man who in charge of supervising that everyone was paying complete attention to the speech. He used to hold a stick that had feathers on one side, and on the other side, it had a hard surface that warned the little kids about not to move or cry by any chance. In regard to their religion, they were completely intolerant and believed that “there was only one true religion, and that it was the duty of the civil authorities to impose it, forcibly if necessary, upon all citizens in the interest of saving their souls” (Women’s History, n.d.) The fact that they believed they were the ones chosen by God, isolated them in a sickly way that blinded them to feel mercy for others. The rest of the people who did not agree with these series of rules or that failed one or several of them were punished, treated unmerciful, and even killed.

2.4.3 Puritanism in The Scarlet Letter

As it has been mentioned before, the book’s setting takes place in a Puritan context in all its splendor. Each and every character mentioned in the book experienced in a certain way the power of this ideology. *The Scarlet Letter* give the readers a hint, just a brushstroke of what truly was the puritan society was; in other words, people who imposed a series of harsh rules, even harsher punishments, hypocrisy, and unequal treatments between women and men.

This last differentiation between genders is reflected through the experiences of Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale, secret lovers whose love resulted in little Pearl, Hester’s condemnation, and Dimmesdale’s remorse. On one side, Hester had to endure the

shame of her sin being exposed, to wear a scarlet letter that stood for “adulteress,” and an entire life of humiliation and dishonor from the townspeople. Since the beginning of the book, it can be seen the true identity of the puritans. Hester stood up there in the scaffold, being publicly ashamed, and holding a newborn child. They never thought neither about Hester’s feelings nor for her poor child. The puritans could only see that the evil emblem meant how deep a human being could fall from the grace of God.

She endured being treated as trash, being despised, even though she wanted to help everyone she that bumped with, and even when she did it with the best of intentions. Hester Prynne’s life changed since that moment, but these series of tests transformed her into a woman of good, with a brave heart and ferocious soul (n.d.). On the contrary, there is Arthur Dimmesdale. He was one of the most influential and admired persons in town. He was a very respected and honorable person, even considered a “saint.” For Puritans, the church people had a higher status among the rest (n.d.) Therefore, due to his position in society, he got too scared to confess the truth. After Hester took all the blame for his sin, an overwhelming feeling of guilt was installed in Dimmesdale’s heart. He got sick and his health started to decline in every way, until the day his soul weakened so badly, that he ended up dying.

The feelings and emotions that these two characters experimented were similar, but Hester felt them publicly and Dimmesdale kept suffering secretly. They both were guilty, but the puritan society treated them completely different. Hester was stigmatized as an adulteress, a woman fulfilled with sin and an example of evil for her flaw, rejected from society; nonetheless, Dimmesdale, was treated with respect, almost adoration by all the people, worshiped for his great preachers (the ones that he felt the most, because of the

secret sin that lurked his life) and even in the end, when he exposed his true self in front of everyone in the election day, there were rumors that said that he was not capable of such infamy, that he just wanted to exemplify how equal he was to the rest of the people (Economical/ Sociological Aspects in *The Scarlet Letter*, 2013). This point leads us to the next topic which is mainly present in the book. The puritan hypocrisy.

2.4.4 Puritan hypocrisy

Although the book revolves around adultery as the main sin, Hawthorne's intention was to reveal how hypocrite puritan people were. In the book, almost every character showed a hint of this "sin." First, the townspeople as puritans, they bragged about the fact that they lived and followed the Holy Scriptures where it said that only God can judge a person, and that all humanity are sinners, yet everyone in town forgot about their condition and detested Hester for her sin. She had to accept it because it was impossible to hide a pregnancy, but how many of the rest had hidden sins that they could never be able to reveal as a result of the big mask of puritan hypocrisy? (n.d.)

Another example is Hester herself. She admitted her "sin" of being with another man rather than with her husband, but she did not believe this was a sin. She got married with Roger Chillingworth, when they both lived in Europe she was behaving hypocritically, and after her husband supposedly died drowned in the sea, she broke her "wedding vows," she fell in love with another man, betrayed her husband and had a child with the other man. After man found out what happened, Hester left her lover completely exposed to the burning flames of Chillingworth's revenge (n.d.)

Another character that showed hypocrisy explicitly is Arthur Dimmesdale. He was in charge of preaching the Holy Bible, the Word of God. People thought he was a person

with no flaws or sin within him (n.d.) They usually praised him all the time, asked him for advice, confessed their sins to him. And yet, he was half responsible for the pregnancy of Hester Prynne. And not only that, but he allowed Hester to take all the guilt for him, and he kept the secret for himself. He even was the one that exhorted Hester when she was being exposed in front of the town. The people's opinions were so important for Dimmesdale that the hypocrisy and guilt that he felt, ended up killing him.

Moreover, Roger Chillingworth is also one good example of hypocrisy in the book. He welcomed a very sick reverend Dimmesdale, they lived together, slept under the same roof, and tortured him day and night. He pretended to be his friend only to get his revenge back. After all, Chillingworth ended up blaming Hester for converting him into a monster, without recognizing that it was his choice (The Scarlet Letter Fan page, n.d.).

2.4.5 Puritan Judgement

One special characteristic that Nathaniel Hawthorne wanted to emphasize about the puritan society was judgement. Back in the puritan days, a woman was supposed to have a great testimony, live her life according to God, serve others, be pure, etc. (2014) Therefore, when Hester was condemned as an adulteress and was forced to use the scarlet letter, her reputation was smashed. The point with this specific issue is that everyone in town was probably struggling with a secret sin in their lives.

Hawthorne blamed the puritan exaggerated rules and laws of transforming the people into judges of others without seeing their flaws first. As the bible says, "Why do you look at the speck of in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the log in your own eye?" (Mathew 7:3). The irony is that the puritans supposedly obeyed God's word and God's

word only, and yet they did not put this specific verse in practice. They adjusted the gospel to their own convenience.

2.4.9 Moral values

The first moral value that they had deeply ingrained was the literature only for moral instruction. Puritan writers' main purpose was to lead all their readers through the path of righteousness. Only men were allowed to write and if a woman wanted to do it, it was seen as something unacceptable. The second one was alcohol. They consumed alcohol, but in moderated amounts. It was forbidden to exaggerate with the alcohol, and it could be punished by the puritan law (Puritan Beliefs and Values, 2011)

Another important value that the puritans believed was ~~the~~ self-control. As it was said before, the puritan's bases were on the Bible and the statutes within it. They were supposed to behave as new creatures and walk in God's path. When a person "converted," they expected to see the change not only through words, but with the testimony of actions. For puritans, actions spoke louder than words (2017)

The Puritans also were very careful and picky with the people who attended to church. It was a type of "membership," where the ones worthy of having it were the people whose lives were outstandingly enlighten by God. Some churches even required their parishioners to publicly share their testimony of conversion. And those who were undecided of their beliefs, were considered as filthy individuals, far from God (n.d)

They also valued the good works much. They truly believed that God gave them the mission of grace, which consisted in reconciling the lost souls with the Heavenly Father through the action of the Holy Spirit, and it was a promise that God, in His sovereignty, did

to humanity. Also, they believed that the performance of good actions were going to lead them to “win” salvation and eternal life (Puritan Morals & Standards, 2017).

2.5 Themes and Symbols

As the investigation work is a literature analysis, two factors are primordial: themes and symbols. They both are literary devices used for having a better comprehension of the subject under observation, in this case the book *The Scarlet Letter*. The difference between symbols and themes is that themes are general ideas about the author’s thoughts on a topic, while the symbols develop and explain what that theme or themes are about. To have a better understanding of these two concepts, and to mention several of the themes and motifs present in *The Scarlet Letter*, they will be developed below.

2.5.1 Themes

A theme in literature is the main idea or ideas that the author of that specific literary work wants to highlight (2018) This idea can be constantly repeated throughout the whole book. There are several ways in which the author can express these ideas or beliefs through the feelings of the main character(s), a dialogue among between characters, the narrator of the book, or simply by describing the lifestyle, thoughts, actions, and events of the characters. Themes tend to be universal; this means that their purpose is to install in the reader’s life experiences, feelings, and touch their weak spots in order for the book to be meaningful. As the book that is being developed in the investigation is *The Scarlet Letter*, it is important to mention the main themes presented in the book.

The first one is sin. The book starts, in the first chapter describing the commotion of a town as a result of a woman who committed the sin of adultery. The second theme is hypocrisy. Each character in the book, acted hypocritically in some point of the book. The

guilt and the blame are persistent themes in the book, as well. Through Reverend Dimmesdale's life mostly. Revenge is also another theme that can be seen in the book, through Roger Chillingworth character, who was obsessed with the idea of making Dimmesdale to pay for his big debt towards him. Moreover, it can be femininity through Hester's great sufferings and her capability, as a woman, to overcome all the obstacles that life putted in her way. The last would be the criticism towards the Puritan society in which the characters lived, which provoked a lot of misfortunes in their lives.

2.5.2 Symbols

A symbol can be a person, place, action, word, or thing that represents something more rather than just its essence. In literature specifically, Harmon says that "A symbol combines a literal and sensuous quality with an abstract or suggestive aspect" (*A Handbook to Literature*, 2006). Therefore, a symbol is used to convey a meaning beyond its literal significate. Several examples can be seen in *The Scarlet Letter* such as the following. First of all, the rose bush that appears at the beginning of the book. As well as Hester's daughter, Pearl, who is a symbol herself. One of the main symbols is the scarlet letter located on Hester's chest. The forest is also some of the most important symbols in the book. And finally, The Black Man is another symbol present in the book.

Chapter III

Methodological Framework

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the methodology of the investigation, as this is going to help collecting all the necessary information that will be needed; for example, sources, instruments, theories, and approaches. In addition, the method that will be implemented to give the investigation a more exact result, is going to be explained. Throughout the existence of research works, several ideologies and currents of thinking were born, in order to solve problems for every and each of the different types of researches.

According to an article written by the University of the Witwatersrand (2019), the research methodology “is the specific procedures or techniques used to identify, select, process, and analyze information about a topic. In a research paper, the methodology section allows the reader to critically evaluate a study’s overall validity and reliability.” It continues saying that the research methodology answers two different questions “How was the data collected or generated? How was it analyzed?” That is exactly the goal of this chapter, to present the way in which this information and this data will be obtained. There are two main different perspectives: quantitative and qualitative. They share several characteristics, Francis (2019) establishes four similarities between them. First, participants are necessary, what changes is the type of participants that will be needed; second they both use measurement data, but with different focuses; third, one of them can become the foundation for the other, from the results obtained in one, the other one can be started as a simultaneous investigation; and finally, they both produce data that can be analyzed. The

data in both cases is analyzed, what changes is the way in which the information is gathered.

The definition of both will be given, as well as the one that will be used in the respective investigation.

3.1 Research Approach

The Puritan era brought a huge amount of ideological debates that gave birth to theories that explained the fundamentals in which puritans worked inside and out of their society. In order to understand the complexity of this ~~their current~~ of thinking current, the qualitative method is the most appropriate to use in the present investigation, as the qualitative approach is all about the opinions of the object of investigation.

According to Crossman (2019), the qualitative approach “is a research method that uses non-numerical information to understand a specific part of a subject, population, or problem.” The purpose of qualitative researches is portrayed in people’s and life experiences. The idea behind the usage of the qualitative method is that ~~because~~ the nature of this investigation relies on a specific population. It will be helpful to achieve the garner of information from outside sources, such as professors specialized in history of American literature, and online resources related with the importance of puritan ideology. This because the analysis of Puritanism through *The Scarlet Letter*, concentrates on a historical and social approach, which favors the understanding of the behavior and relation that puritans had within their society and with the outside world.

Also, there is another approach to take into consideration, a review of its counterpart the quantitative approach. The quantitative approach focuses on gathering numerical and statistical information. The main purpose of this method is to point out the actual numbers of the object of investigation. There is also another method implemented in research investigations. The mixed method, which according to an article written by FoodRisc Resource Centre (2016) “is a methodology for conducting research that involves collecting, analyzing, and integrating quantitative (experiments, surveys) and qualitative (focus groups, interviews) research.” Therefore, the mixed method consists in using both, the quantitative and the qualitative method.

3.2 Research Design

To understand the research design, it is important to define the concept of phenomenology. Phenomenology is a philosophical belief that focuses on a specific object of interest. A guide made by Groden, Kreiswirth, and Szeman named *Johns Hopkins Guide for Literary Theory and Criticism Entry* (2005) states that “For phenomenology the ultimate source of all meaning and value is the lived experience of human beings.” This means that this concept takes into count the humanity and perception of the people and their environment. It also states that it describes the structures of experience, in particular consciousness, the imagination, relations with other persons, and the situations of the human subject in society and history. Phenomenological theories of literature regard works of art as mediators between the consciousnesses of the author and the reader or as attempts to disclose aspects of the being of humans and their worlds.

This is an important issue to consider for the nature of the investigation, as its aim is to deep into the roots of puritanism and its several reflections in *The Scarlet Letter*, as well

as the analysis of the lifestyle of each of the main characters in the book, and the way in which they fit in their society. The history behind the topic is vastly wide. Therefore, it would be comprised from the emergence of Puritanism as a current of thinking, that is when this group separated from the Church of England and emigrated to North America. Analyzing also the influence reflected on a variety of forms: lifestyle, custom, religion, and literature. Such thing will favor a historical hue about puritanism, with the help of interviews with professors that teach American literature in several universities. As well as the use of books, essays and thesis about the puritans. Secondary, an overview about *the Scarlet Letter*, through a literary analysis will highlight the most important characteristics of the history behind the book, the characters' point of view about society, and the moral values exposed in the book, which will be developed with the help of online sources.

3.3 Information Sources

To develop the investigation as reliable as possible, the use of primary, secondary, and tertiary sources will be implemented. In accordance with Streefkerk (2018), a primary source is the “first-hand source and considered authoritative.” Opposite case from the secondary sources, which are “considered less credible and reliable.” Lastly, a tertiary source is where all the information taken from the primary and the secondary source relies.

The main three information sources would be the *Scarlet Letter* book, the usage of several tables, and investigations that were made previously about the topic. The primary source that will be taken into consideration for the investigation, is *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne.

The secondary source will be the usage of three tables which contain the symbols, themes, theories and chunks of the book analyzed through the sociological approach. As a

tertiary source, theses; as for example, an investigation thesis made by David Littlefield and Rachel Sara called “The Scarlet Letter: A critical review.”

3.4 Analysis Categories

The nature of this investigation is a literary analysis of *The Scarlet Letter* with a sociological approach, as well as the Puritanism and their perspective of judgement. For this reason, it is important to understand the whole meaning of a literary analysis. According to the Meriam Webster’s dictionary, an analysis can have two possible perspectives: “to make a detailed examination of anything complex in order to understand its nature, and also to make a separation of a whole into its component parts.”

On the other hand, the definition of literary according to the Oxford dictionary has also two meanings “concerning the writing, study, or content of literature,” as well as “associated with literary works or other formal writing; having a marked style intended to create a particular emotional effect.” Therefore, the literary analysis of a book responds to two main questions: how and why? How and why a piece of literature was written. In this particular case, the literary analysis will help the investigation to understand how the puritan society used to work.

3.4.1 Sociological Approach

According to Kennedy and Gioia (n.d.) what the critic does in a sociological approach is to “examine literature in the cultural, economic, and political context in which it is written or received.” This will help to give to the investigation a much deeper understanding of the order in which everything worked back in the puritan era.

3.4.2 Puritanism

Puritanism is the ideology derived from the Church of England back in the sixteenth century. It was known for having very strict doctrines and religious disciplines. The puritans became one of the most powerful groups and they also were one of the first people that arrived at the territory known as New England, Massachusetts, United States (Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 2019).

3.4.3 Judgement

This is one of the main topics that *The Scarlet Letter* develops. Nathaniel Hawthorne's idea was to expose the real nature of puritans, their flaws; in other words, the worst side of the "purest" society of the era. For him, the punishments and disciplines of the puritans were completely absurd and extremist. First of all, the mistreatment of Hester Prynne, in comparison with his "lover" Arthur Dimmesdale. Secondary, the disrespectfulness for the female gender, as it can be seen in the horrible treatment and punishment that Hester received from the townspeople. And finally, the idolatry of the men, as it can be seen with Dimmesdale, that even though, he was equally "guilty" as Hester, he was cowardly enough to die, before facing the consequences of his acts.

3.5 Data collection instruments

In order to answer the question of the investigation and the objectives, the use of instruments will be necessary to achieve the goal. Such instruments are three tables. The first one will deal with the Sociological approach. In this table, it will be extracted passages from the book reflects a sociological characteristic within it. Along with the Puritanism and all of the reflections that are seen in the book. And again, a quotation that

supports the reflection, as well as the explanation why it can be taken as a puritan characteristic. Example of table 1.1.

Sociological approach and Puritanism (judgement, sin, etc.)	Quotation	Explanation

The other table that will be included is related to the themes found in the book. In this table, it will be developed several of themes present in the book, a quotation within the book that supports the theme, and the explanation why it reflects that specific theme.

Example of table 1.3

Theme	Quotation	Explanation

Finally, the last table will show the different symbols that appear in the book, a quotation supporting the symbol, and the explanation of it.

Example of table 1.4

Theory	Quotation that backs up the theory	Explanation

3.6 Collection Data Process and Data Analysis

The collection of the information necessary to undergo with every objective in this investigation will be done with the help of tables of content and the usage of investigation projects.

There are two main reasons why the usage of tables is essential in the investigation. The first reason is because it makes easier to understand the topic.

The majority of the time, old books tend to be harder to understand in a deeper way for the general public, for the language sometimes is too complicated, or the topics within the book tend to be hidden. Through a table, chunks of the book can be carefully analyzed and the themes within the book can be acknowledge clearly.

The second aspect to take into count is the fact that the use of a table can facilitate the order of the information and the topics to be explained. The information is easier to read and easier to remember.

Another important issue to mentioned is that the tables will explain several topics such as the theories used in the investigation, the different themes presented in the book, and the symbols, which are a very important part of the analysis of the book. These three tables will explain the reflections of puritanism presented in the *Scarlet Letter*, the themes that Nathaniel Hawthorne, the author of the book, wanted to emphasize, and the symbols that give the reader a different perspective of subtle ideas with powerful meaning for the characters in the book and for the readers in general.

Chapter IV

Data Analysis

In this chapter, the main goal is to explain the information obtained in Chapter II and III, in order to get a better understanding of what the book is about and the details that must be considered to achieve this goal. According to Sridhar (2018), the “Data analysis is the process of evaluating data using analytical and statistical tools to discover useful information and aid in business decision making.” Therefore, in this investigation, the tools consisted in three tables. The first one will contain a quote that contains puritan reflections, as well as hints of the sociological approach, and the explanation why it corresponds to each of the two theories mentioned before. The second table will be about the themes presented in the book, along with a quote that supports it. And the third table will explain the different symbols that appeared in the book, as well as the reason why that quote represents that specific symbol.

It is important to remember the main ideas regarding the meaning of puritanism as an ideology, in addition to the definition of the sociological approach. The puritanism was a very influential ideology that was born in England, as a result of the separation between England from the Vatican. The puritans expanded and separated from the Church of England, because they thought they needed to be “purified from the Catholic practices.” The puritans were known for believing that their purpose was to enlighten the world with God’s word and to become a flesh-and-blood example of good works and behavior (Puritans in America: Beliefs, Religion & History, n.d.).

On the other hand, the sociological approach covers concepts related to the author's connection and status within the society in which he or she lived in. It examines the point of view of the author regarding its environment and the relationship between the author experiences in and out of the content of the book (Pyle, et al. 2013). The sociological approach also covers aspects such as family relations, traditions, religion, etc. Below it will be the first table.

4.1 Puritanism and the Sociological Approach

Sociological Approach/ Puritanism Reflection	Quote	Explanation
Puritanism	"...A penalty, which in our days, would refer a degree of mocking infamy and ridicule, might then be interested with almost as strong a dignity as the punishment of death itself" (Chapter 2)	The Puritans were very strict concerning about what they thought sin was. So, in this quote, Nathaniel Hawthorne was trying to mock on the absurdness of the puritan's idea of punishment
Puritanism	"A throng of bearded men, in sad-	This specific passage describes perfectly the

	<p>colored garments and gray, steeple-crowned hats, intermixed with women, some wearing hoods, and others bareheaded, was assembled in front of a wooden edifice, the door of which was heavily timbered with oak, and studded with iron spikes.” (Chapter 1)</p>	<p>clothes and accessories puritans used to wear. It was a very important part for them to dress plainly, because they were trying to get rid of all costs of the Roma Catholic Church. Therefore, by dressing in this way, they thought they become “more devoted to Christianity”</p>
<p>Puritanism</p>	<p>Into this festal season of the year—as it already was, and continued to be during the greater part of two centuries—the Puritans compressed whatever mirth and public joy they deemed allowable to human infirmity; thereby so far dispelling the customary</p>	<p>In this long explanation of the New England Holiday, in chapter 21, the narrator wanted to make sure that the reader understands the puritan celebrations. The narrator gave a wide explanation of the people who used to attend this festivity, the environment in which it</p>

	<p>cloud, that, for the space of a single holiday, they appeared scarcely more grave than most other communities at a period of general affliction. But we perhaps exaggerate the gray or sable tinge, which undoubtedly characterized the mood and manners of the age. The persons now in the marketplace of Boston had not been born to an inheritance of Puritanic gloom. They were native Englishmen, whose fathers had lived in the sunny richness of the Elizabethan epoch; a time when the life of England, viewed as one great mass, would appear</p>	<p>was developed, the music, the parade, the colors of the dresses, the decoration, and so on so forth. It is also one of only passages in the whole book in which the narrator described the puritan society that surrounded Hester and her daughter Pearl, as not being judgmental and strict, they appeared to be just human beings that celebrated the special occasion of choosing a new governor. It talked also a bit about how the Elizabethan era used to be. Queen Elizabeth was the queen of England from 1558 to 1603, and it was considered one of</p>
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	<p>to have been as stately, magnificent, and joyous, as the world has ever witnessed. Had they followed their hereditary taste, the New England settlers would have illustrated all events of public importance by bonfires, banquets, pageantries, and processions. Nor would it have been impracticable, in the observance of majestic ceremonies, to combine mirthful recreation with solemnity, and give, as it were, a grotesque and brilliant embroidery to the great robe of state, which a nation, at such festivals, puts on. There</p>	<p>the greatest epochs in England history. Thanks to Queen Elizabeth, England achieved the peak in several issues. And the narrator shared that most of the “fathers of the town” lived that glorious days, and this was reflected on the gorgeous ornaments and extravagant trimmings in which the city dressed up.</p>
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	<p>was some shadow of an attempt of this kind in the mode of celebrating the day on which the political year of the colony commenced. The dim reflection of a remembered splendor, a colorless and manifold diluted repetition of what they had beheld in proud old London, —we will not say at a royal coronation, but at a Lord Mayor’s show, —might be traced in the customs which our forefathers instituted, with reference to the annual installation of magistrates. The fathers and founders of the commonwealth—the statesman, the priest, and</p>	
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	<p>the soldier—deemed it a duty then to assume the outward state and majesty, which, in accordance with antique style, was looked upon as the proper garb of public or social eminence. All came forth, to move in procession before the people’s eye, and thus impart a needed dignity to the single framework of a government so newly constructed. Then, too, the people were countenanced, if not encouraged, in relaxing the severe and close application to their various modes of rugged industry, which, at all</p>	
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	<p>other times, seemed of the same piece and material with their religion. Here, it is true, were none of the appliances which popular merriment would so readily have found in the England of Elizabeth's time, or that of James;—no rude shows of a theatrical kind; no minstrel with his harp and legendary ballad, nor gleeman, with an ape dancing to his music; no juggler, with his tricks of mimic witchcraft; no Merry Andrew, to stir up the multitude with jests, perhaps hundreds of years old, but still</p>	
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	<p>effective, by their appeals to the very broadest sources of mirthful sympathy.”</p> <p>(Chapter 21)</p>	
<p>Sociological Approach</p>	<p>“This child of its father’s guilt and its mother’s shame hath come from the hand of God.”</p> <p>(Chapter 8)</p>	<p>Dimmesdale’s, in this occasion, was is defending Hester’s right of raising little Pearl, from Governor Bellingham’s idea of taking Pearl away from Hester and putting her in the hands of a person with better capabilities of showing her the righteous path of God. One of the points that were taken into count in the sociological approach is family relations and, in this passage, it was completely evident the</p>

		<p>“passion” of Dimmesdale’s heart to defend Hester and Pearl from being separated.</p>
<p>Sociological Approach</p>	<p>“God gave me the child!” cried she. “He gave her, in requital of all things else, which ye had taken from me. She is my happiness! —she is my torture, none the less! Pearl keeps me here in life! Pearl punishes me too! See ye not, she is the scarlet letter, only capable of being loved, and so endowed with a million-fold the power of retribution for my sin? Ye shall not take her! I will die first! (Chapter 8)</p>	<p>In this passage, Hester defended herself from Governor Bellingham’s accusations regarding that she was not suitable for raising Pearl, responsibly. She stated that Pearl was her only treasure, that she represented the scarlet letter itself, and that if they wanted to take Pearl away from her side, she would rather die first. It was evident how deeply attached and with the passion Hester loved her child. A characteristic that was very attached to</p>

		the sociological approach.
Sociological Approach	<p>“Were it not, thinkest you, for thy little one’s temporal and eternal welfare, that she be taken out of thy charge, and clad soberly, and disciplined strictly, and instructed in the truths of Heaven and earth?”</p> <p>(Chapter 4)</p>	<p>In this passage, it was Governor Bellingham the one that was talking and using religion bases to justify his reason for considering taking Pearl away from Hester. One of the <i>Scarlet Letter</i> most important issues is religion in society. This passage is a true example of how far the puritans used religion to “achieve” their purpose.</p>

4.2 Themes

The themes within a book are the most important ideas that the author highlights in order to understand that those specific ideas, thoughts, ideologies, remain within the mind of the readers. The themes within the *Scarlet Letter* will be presented below.

Theme	Quote	Explanation
Hypocrisy	<p>“What can thy silence do for him, except it tempt him, —yea, compel him, as it were—to add hypocrisy to sin? Heaven hath granted thee an open ignominy, that thereby thou mayest work out an open triumph over the evil within thee, and the sorrow without. Take heed how thou deniest to him—who, perchance, hath not the courage to grasp it for himself—the bitter, but wholesome, cup that is now presented to thy lips!” (Chapter 3)</p>	<p>These are the words that Dimmesdale told Hester while she was being judged in front of all the people in town. He assumed that was Hester’s responsibility to confess the name of her lover, while being too coward and hypocrite to acknowledge that he was guilty too.</p>
Hypocrisy	<p>“Here, indeed, in the sable simplicity that generally characterized the Puritanic modes of dress, there might be an infrequent call for the finer productions of her handiwork.</p>	<p>In this passage, it is evident the hypocrisy presented in the townspeople as a community. On one side, they were constantly blaming Hester about the symbol in her chest</p>

	<p>Yet the taste of the age, demanding whatever was elaborate in compositions of this kind, did not fail to extend its influence over our stern progenitors, who had cast behind them so many fashions which it might seem harder to dispense with.”</p>	<p>and her shameful sin, but, on the other hand, they were dressing with clothes tailored by the one they exiled as an outcast.</p>
<p>Hypocrisy</p>	<p>“What a strange, sad man is he!” said the child, as if speaking partly to herself. “In the dark night-time, he calls us to him, and holds thy hand and mine, as when we stood with him on the scaffold yonder! And in the deep forest, where only the old trees can hear, and the strip of sky see it, he talks with thee, sitting on a heap of moss! And he kisses my forehead, too, so that the little brook would hardly wash it off! But, here, in</p>	<p>The little Pearl was is the one that said this; moreover, she was referring to Mr. Dimmesdale and how hypocrite he was with her mother and her. He was ashamed to talk to them in public, because people’s opinion was more important for him than his own flesh-and-bone child. Dimmesdale’s showed one face to Hester and Pearl, and a whole new</p>

	<p>the sunny day, and among all the people, he knows us not; nor must we know him! A strange, sad man is he, with his hand always over his heart!” (Chapter 21)</p>	<p>different one to the townspeople and the members of his church.</p>
<p>Revenge</p>	<p>The intellect of Roger Chillingworth had now a sufficiently plain path before it. It was not, indeed, precisely that which he had laid out for himself to tread. Calm, gentle, passionless, as he appeared, there was yet, we fear, a quiet depth of malice, hitherto latent, but active now, in this unfortunate old man, which led him to imagine a more intimate revenge than any mortal had ever wreaked upon an enemy. To make himself the one trusted friend, to whom should be confided all the fear, the remorse, the agony, the ineffectual repentance, the backward rush of</p>	<p>This passage talks about when Dimmesdale and Roger Chillingworth started living together. Chillingworth took advantage of this situation to start harassing Mr. Dimmesdale, in order to get his revenge. Chillingworth started to psychologically torture Dimmesdale, and in this way, being able to redeem himself from the shame of being cheated on.</p>

	<p>sinful thoughts, expelled in vain!</p> <p>All that guilty sorrow, hidden from the world, whose great heart would have pitied and forgiven, to be revealed to him, the Pitiless, to him, the Unforgiving! All that dark treasure to be lavished on the very man, to whom nothing else could so adequately pay the debt of vengeance! (Chapter 11)</p>	
<p>Revenge</p>	<p>“Certainly, if the meteor kindled up the sky, and disclosed the earth, with an awfulness that admonished Hester Prynne and the clergyman of the day of judgment, then might Roger Chillingworth have passed with them for the arch-fiend, standing there, with a smile and scowl, to claim his own. So vivid was the expression, or so intense the minister's perception of it, that it seemed still to remain painted on</p>	<p>It was obvious that the look in Roger Chillingworth's eyes, was the one from a man who had nothing, but pure anger and a terrible desire to get the redemption that he thought he deserved.</p>

	<p>the darkness, after the meteor had vanished, with an effect as if the street and all things else were at once annihilated.” (Chapter 12)</p>	
<p>Revenge</p>	<p>"Yea, woman, thou sayest truly!" cried old Roger Chillingworth, letting the lurid fire of his heart blaze out before her eyes. "Better had he died at once! Never did mortal suffer what this man has suffered. And all, all, in the sight of his worst enemy! He has been conscious of me. He has felt an influence dwelling always upon him like a curse. He knew, by some spiritual sense, —for the Creator never made another being so sensitive as this, —he knew that no friendly hand was pulling at his heart-strings, and that an eye was looking curiously into him, which sought only evil, and found it. But he knew not that the</p>	<p>Here Hester tried to convince Chillingworth to stop mortifying Dimmesdale in the way he was doing it. But as they both were talking, Chillingworth himself acknowledged the fact that he had no reason other than getting to consummate the revenge he was planning. He became a monster, a whole new different man because of the thirst for revenge; a demon-like human being.</p>

	<p>eye and hand were mine! With the superstition common to his brotherhood, he fancied himself given over to a friend, to be tortured with frightful dreams, and desperate thoughts, the sting of remorse, and despair of pardon; as a foretaste of what awaits him beyond the grave. But it was the constant shadow of my presence! —the closest propinquity of the man whom he had most vilely wronged! —and who had grown to exist only by this perpetual poison of the direst revenge! Yea, indeed! —he did not err! —there was a fiend at his elbow! A mortal man, with once a human heart, has become a fiend for his especial torment!" (Chapter 14)</p>	
<p>Guilt and Blame</p>	<p>“Make way, good people, make way, in the King’s name,” cried he. “Open a passage; and, I</p>	<p>This passage reflects on how common it was for puritans to judge a person. The person</p>

	<p>promise ye, Mistress Prynne shall be set where man, woman, and child may have a fair sight of her brave apparel, from this time till an hour past meridian. A blessing on the righteous Colony of the Massachusetts, where iniquity is dragged out into the sunshine! Come along, Madam Hester, and show your scarlet letter in the market-place!" A lane was forthwith opened through the crowd of spectators. Preceded by the beadle and attended by an irregular procession of stern-browed men and unkindly-visaged women, Hester Prynne set forth towards the place appointed for her punishment. A crowd of eager and curious schoolboys, understanding little of the matter in hand, except that it gave them a half-holiday, ran</p>	<p>who was escorting Hester was the one who declared these words, and the effect that it caused in people, really reflected the way in which the townspeople were thirsty for having something to criticize and judge.</p>
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	<p>before her progress, turning their heads continually to stare into her face, and at the winking baby in her arms, and at the ignominious letter on her breast.” (Chapter 2)</p>	
<p>Guilt and Blame</p>	<p>He longed to speak out, from his own pulpit, at the full height of his voice, and tell the people what he was. “I, whom you behold in these black garments of the priesthood,—I, who ascend the sacred desk, and turn my pale face heavenward, taking upon myself to hold communion, in your behalf, with the Most High Omniscience,—I, in whose daily life you discern the sanctity of Enoch,—I, whose footsteps, as you suppose, leave a gleam along my earthly track, whereby the pilgrims that shall come after me may be guided to the regions of the blest,—I, who have laid the</p>	<p>This passage describes perfectly the way in which guilt was consuming Dimmesdale’s mind to madness levels. He overthought so many times the possibility of confessing his sin in front of his congregation, but he failed to accomplish this goal over and over again. He genuinely said it a few times in several of his sermons, but people were so fanatic of him that they praised him even more than before. this action made Dimmesdale to feel even more guilty about</p>

	<p>hand of baptism upon your children,—I, who have breathed the parting prayer over your dying friends, to whom the Amen sounded faintly from a world which they had quitted,—I, your pastor, whom you so reverence and trust, am utterly a pollution and a lie!... He had told his hearers that he was altogether vile, a viler companion of the vilest, the worst of sinners, an abomination, a thing of unimaginable iniquity... He had striven to put a cheat upon himself by making the avowal of a guilty conscience, but had gained only one other sin, and a self-acknowledged shame, without the momentary relief of being self-deceived. He had spoken the very truth and transformed it into the veriest</p>	<p>the secret sin that haunted his thoughts all the time.</p>
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	<p>falsehood. And yet, by the constitution of his nature, he loved the truth, and loathed the lie, as few men ever did.</p> <p>Therefore, above all things else, he loathed his miserable self!”</p> <p>(Chapter 11)</p>	
<p>Guilt and Blame</p>	<p>“In Mr. Dimmesdale’s secret closet, under lock and key, there was a bloody scourge.</p> <p>Oftentimes, this Protestant and Puritan divine had plied it on his own shoulders; laughing bitterly at himself the while, and smiting so much the more pitilessly, because of that bitter laugh.”</p>	<p>Reverend Dimmesdale acquired in his heart such guilt that he began to auto-scourge himself, due to the exasperation of his soul.</p>
<p>Sin</p>	<p>“Thus the young and pure would be taught to look at her, with the scarlet letter flaming on her breast,—at her, the child of honorable parents,—at her, the mother of a babe, that would hereafter be a woman, —at her,</p>	<p>This passage represents very well the way in which Hester’s sin was seen through the eyes of the people. They used her flaw as an example of sin itself.</p>

	<p>who had once been innocent, —as the figure, the body, the reality of sin.” (Chapter 5)</p>	
<p>Sin</p>	<p>Her sin, her ignominy, were the roots which she had struck into the soil. It was as if a new birth, with stronger assimilations than the first, had converted the forestland, still so uncongenial to every other pilgrim and wanderer, into Hester Prynne’s wild and dreary, but life-long home. All other scenes of earth—even that village of rural England, where happy infancy and stainless maidenhood seemed yet to be in her mother’s keeping, like garments put off long ago—were foreign to her, in comparison. The chain that bound her here was of iron links, and galling to her inmost soul, but never could be</p>	<p>This narration happened right after Hester got out from of jail. The flaw that she committed was so relevant for her that she rejected the chance of leaving the place in which she received nothing else but mistreatment, judgmental comments, and shameful whispers, among others etc. Only because she believed that it was the necessary prize to pay for such a fault. Even though, they were other several hidden reasons for her to stay, she decided to reject them from her mind.</p>

	<p>broken... What she compelled herself to believe, —what, finally, she reasoned upon, as her motive for continuing a resident of New England, —was half a truth, and half a self-delusion. Here, she said to herself, had been the scene of her guilt, and here should be the scene of her earthly punishment; and so, perchance, the torture of her daily shame would at length purge her soul, and work out another purity than that which she had lost; more saint-like, because the result of martyrdom.”</p>	
<p>Sin</p>	<p>“How strange, indeed! Man had marked this woman’s sin by a scarlet letter, which had such potent and disastrous efficacy that no human sympathy could reach her, save it were sinful like herself. God, as a direct</p>	<p>This passage shows a comparison between the view of sin for God and for man. People condemned Hester to wear the shaming scarlet letter in her chest and to be considered an adulteress and a</p>

	<p>consequence of the sin which man thus punished, had given her a lovely child, whose place was on that same dishonored bosom, to connect her parent forever with the race and descent of mortals, and to be finally a blessed soul in Heaven!" (Chapter 6)</p>	<p>bad woman, but, on the other hand, God showed his mercy to her by providing her with a beautiful gift embodied in Pearl.</p>
<p>Femininity</p>	<p>The young woman was tall, with a figure of perfect elegance, on a large scale. She had dark and abundant hair, so glossy that it threw off the sunshine with a gleam, and a face which, besides being beautiful from regularity of feature and richness of complexion, had the impressiveness belonging to a marked brow and deep black eyes. She was lady-like, too, after the manner of the feminine gentility of those days; characterized by a certain state</p>	<p>In this case, the narrator was talking about the time when Hester was being escorted out from prison to the scaffold, where she would be publicly judged by everyone. There is mysterious message presented here because she was supposed to look totally devastated, but on the contrary she presented herself almost as a goddess to the cruel world.</p>

	<p>and dignity, rather than by the delicate, evanescent, and indescribable grace, which is now recognized as its indication. And never had Hester Prynne appeared more lady-like, in the antique interpretation of the term, than as she issued from the prison. Those who had before known her and had expected to behold her dimmed and obscured by a disastrous cloud, were astonished, and even startled, to perceive how her beauty shone out, and made a halo of the misfortune and ignominy in which she was enveloped.” (Chapter 2)</p>	
<p>Femininity</p>	<p>“Yet, had little Pearl never come to her from the spiritual world, it might have been far otherwise. Then, she might have come down to us in history, hand in hand with Ann Hutchinson, as the foundress</p>	<p>This passage presents and emphasizes the role of Hester. First, if Pearl had not existed, as she would probably have become a revolutionary woman, out of the box for her</p>

	<p>of a religious sect. She might, in one of her phases, have been a prophetess. She might, and not improbably would, have suffered death from the stern tribunals of the period, for attempting to undermine the foundations of the Puritan establishment. But, in the education of her child, the mother's enthusiasm of thought had something to wreak itself upon. Providence, in the person of this little girl, had assigned to Hester's charge the germ and blossom of womanhood, to be cherished and developed amid a host of difficulties. Everything was against her. The world was hostile. The child's own nature had something wrong in it, which continually betokened that she had been born amiss, —the effluence of her mother's lawless</p>	<p>edge and even a heretic person to the eyes of the puritan people. Second, as a suffered mother who had to raise her child alone and struggled with her sin by herself. However, despite this situation, she could overcome the obstacles. She showed the courage that characterized outstanding women as she was.</p>
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	<p>passion, —and often impelled Hester to ask, in bitterness of heart, whether it were for ill or good that the poor little creature had been born at all.” (Chapter 13)</p>	
<p>Femininity</p>	<p>“At some brighter period ... a new truth would be revealed in order to establish the whole relation between man and woman on a surer ground of mutual happiness.” (Chapter 24)</p>	<p>In this specific quote, Hester expressed her thoughts about equally treatment between woman and man. She shared the idea of women not being judged so easily for their acts, as she was. She also stated the importance of achieving this equality not only for women, but for the happiness of both genders in the relationships between them.</p> <p>(Sparknotes.com, n.d.)</p>

4.3 Symbols

The symbols can be objects, nature, things, and people that hold within a hidden meaning that the one they have by themselves. The table of the symbols that can be found in the *Scarlet Letter* are below.

<p style="text-align: center;">Pearl</p>	<p>“But she named the infant “Pearl,” as being of great price, —purchased with all she had, —her mother’s only treasure!” (Chapter 6)</p>	<p>In this quote, Hester referred to Pearl as something of a great prize. This specific phrase referred to a passage of the Bible that says that "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it" in the book of Mathew, passage 13, verse 45. Pearl represented to Hester her actual sin. For Pearl, she had to give up to her entire life and value to become an outcast. The only thing that Hester had left with, was her beloved Pearl.</p>
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<p>Pearl</p>	<p>“Dear little Pearl, wilt thou kiss me now? Thou wouldst not yonder, in the forest! But now thou wilt?” “My little Pearl!” he said, weakly. There was a sweet and gentle smile on his face, as though his spirit was sinking into a deep rest. Now that his burden was lifted, it seemed almost as though he would play with the child. “Dear little Pearl, will you kiss me now? You wouldn’t when we were in the forest! But will you now?” Pearl kissed his lips. A spell was broken. The great scene of grief, in which the wild infant bore a part, had developed all her sympathies; and as her tears fell upon her father’s cheek, they were the pledge that she would grow up</p>	<p>Differently from the previous passage, in this one, it is visible the transformation of Pearl from being a symbol of sin and pain, to the path that guided her dying father to the eternal peace.</p>
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	<p>amid human joy and sorrow, nor for ever do battle with the world, but be a woman in it. Towards her mother, too, Pearl's errand as a messenger of anguish was all fulfilled." (Chapter 23)</p>	
<p>The Scarlet Letter</p>	<p>"They averred, that the symbol was not mere scarlet cloth, tinged in an earthly dye- pot, but was red-hot with infernal fire, and could be seen glowing all alight, whenever Hester Prynne walked abroad in the night- time." (Chapter 5)</p>	<p>In this passage, the scarlet letter became a type of demoniac symbol for the townspeople. It was seeing as symbol of pure evilness and sin.</p>
<p>The Scarlet Letter</p>	<p>"...the scarlet letter had the effect of a cross on a nun's bosom. It gave the wearer a kind of holiness, enabling her to walk safely though all kinds</p>	<p>As time passed by, thanks to Hester's goodwill and good works, the scarlet letter transformed into a symbol of "abnegation," something that</p>

	of danger. It would have kept her safe if she had fallen prey to thieves. (Chapter 13)	highlighted her from the rest of the society for being admirable and an example of goodness and kindness.
The Forest	“On the outskirts of town, far from other houses, sat a small cottage. It had been built by an earlier settler but was abandoned because the surrounding soil was too sterile for planting and it was too remote. It stood on the shore, looking across the water at the forest-covered hills to the west. A clump of scrubby trees did not so much conceal the cottage as suggest that it was meant to be hidden.” (Chapter 5)	In this specific paragraph, the forest was is where Hester lived after she got out from jail. The little cottage into the forest, represented her condition as an outcast. For the puritans, the forest represented the place where the bad, satanic, impure things dwelled. Therefore, as her cottage was into the forest, it meant that Hester was an evil creature.
The Forest	“As the minister departed, in advance of Hester Prynne and little Pearl, he threw a backward glance; half-	In this quote, the forest represented hope and the only place where Hester and Dimmesdale could talk and

	<p>expecting that he should discover only some faintly traced features or outline of the mother and the child, slowly fading into the twilight of the woods. So great a vicissitude in his life could not at once be received as real.”</p> <p>(Chapter 20)</p>	<p>could be free to express their true selves. In the forest, it was where they planned a new life as a family: Dimmesdale, Hester, and Pearl in Europe. Where nobody knew them; where Hester confessed to Dimmesdale the true identity of Roger Chillingworth, and the place where Mr. Dimmesdale unburdened himself with Hester about all the guilt and struggles, he had had for not being brave enough to acknowledge his condition as a sinner.</p>
<p>The Black Man</p>	<p>“Why dost thou smile so at me?” inquired Hester, troubled at the expression of his eyes. “Art thou like the Black Man that haunts the forest round about us? Hast thou enticed me into a bond</p>	<p>This passage shows the scenario where Hester and Roger Chillingworth had a conversation about the identity of Pearl’s father. As Hester maintained her position of taking that name to the grave,</p>

	<p>that will prove the ruin of my soul?” “Not thy soul,” he answered, with another smile. “No, not thine!” (Chapter 4)</p>	<p>Chillingworth told her that he would not find peace until he found out who was the man and made him pay for his offense against him, Chillingworth. That was when Hester saw “The Black Man” personified in Chillingworth. This expression of the black man was another name that referred to the devil. There was actually a consistent idea given by the narrator of the book, who established that Chillingworth was the devil himself.</p>
<p>The Black Man</p>	<p>“Come away, mother! Come away, or yonder old Black Man will catch you! He hath got hold of the minister already. Come away, mother, or he will catch you! But he</p>	<p>In this quote, Pearl saw Dimmesdale and Chillingworth talking in the window of their house. She rushed to tell her mother that the “Black Man”/ the devil had already taken control of</p>

	cannot catch little Pearl!” (Chapter 10)	Dimmesdale’s life; which is another allusion of Chillingworth being the personification of the devil in the book. The child was able to see the wickedness in Chillingworth’s intentions to harm Mr. Dimmesdale. (eNotes Editorial, 2018)
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Chapter V

Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Purpose of the Conclusion

All good things in life, have an end. The same happens with this investigation. As it has been discussed before, the book that was taken into consideration for this project, *The Scarlet Letter*, was analyzed through a sociological approach. Aspects such as puritanism, their way of seeing life, their morals, and lifestyle were also considered to have a wider understanding of how profound and interesting the book is. Not only because it is rich in literary devices and in literature-wise issues, but because of the profoundness and understanding of human nature the book has, as it covers topics that allow an empathy between the reader and the character. Furthermore, it lets the reader to feel what the characters are feeling, how they suffer, and how they love, among others. The conclusions of an investigation project are is extremely important because they provide all the important events of the investigation that are brought to give them a closing. Therefore, it is important to show the results of the investigation throughout this chapter.

5.2 Conclusions

As this investigation was made using specific objectives, in order to have a better understanding of the book, here are the conclusions that could be taken out for the wanted purpose.

5.2.1 To identify how the puritan morale affected the main characters in the book.

Through this specific objective, it can be stated the way in which the puritan environment was completely clarified and presented from the very beginning of the book. Nathaniel Hawthorne, the author of the book, came from a family deeply rooted in the puritan traditions; therefore, he was aware of the flaws and the strengths of the puritan society and their morals. This is something he constantly acknowledged through the themes in the book.

The puritans were known for being very harsh and strict and also by their awful punishments towards the people that committed a mistake or a “sin.” These characteristics are evident throughout the book and in the life of every single character, specially, the main ones. It was evident how these morals affected Hester Prynne and her child, condemning them to live as outcasts, rejected from society for being considered impure and constantly used as examples of everything that was wrong with humankind.

This constant harassment let Hester to decide to stay there, in a town where she was “hated,” instead of going back to Europe and restart a new life with her child, after she went out of jail. Another character that was influenced by these morals was Arthur Dimmesdale, the famous minister who got Hester pregnant. One of the strongest features presented in the puritan morals was purity; consequently, this was exactly the reason why they decided to separate from the Church of England, as they thought it was necessary to become purer and one of the main leaders of the puritan movement, John Winthrop, said that they wanted to build a society “upon the hill, where “the eyes of the world were upon them” as a result, God would be honored, and He would bless them. But unfortunately, they started to become hypocrite (CliffsNotes, n.d.)

Their desire to appear pure towards the eyes of others ended up leading them to become a hypocrite society. This characteristic of the moral of puritans is reflected on almost every character, but it is more visible in Dimmesdale's personality. Starting with the fact that he let Hester to be humiliated and treated like trash in front of the townspeople, because he was too afraid of the people's opinion, as well as losing his good reputation. Moreover, he also was "in charge" of giving an exhortation sermon for the "atonement" of her soul. The hypocrisy of his soul reached to the point of madness and his life was consumed by guilt and led him to his death.

5.2.2 To explain how the judgement of puritans affected Hester Prynne, the main character of *The Scarlet Letter*

This is one of the main topics in the book itself. As it was said before, the book starts with the scenario of a woman with her newborn baby coming out from prison, which was the least appropriate place for a mother with a newborn child. Hester stood there for a moment and then she walked through the crowd towards the scaffold, with the only purpose of being exposed in front of everybody to see the infamous sign in her chest, and the sin personified in the child that she was holding in her arms. The book describes, at the beginning, a young woman with a lovely aspect, but who suffered from some awful comments of a group of ladies who were commenting (gossiping) about the possible causes that led her to fall from the grace of God. Her most remarkable feature was her long dark hair. A feature that she lost as time passed by thanks to the harshness of the life she lived. However, it was almost the only feature she lost. Instead, she acquired a magnificent strength, sincerity, compassion; so, she gained character thanks to the difficulties of the life she lived.

She had to endure the look of the entire town that stared at her with nothing but contempt and hate. In other words, pure hatred towards her. She decided to stay in the town that rejected her, just because she thought it was some type of “divine judgement,” so it was necessary for her to stay and atone her sins. The town father even thought about taking Pearl, her daughter, away from her. They kind of countermined against her, claiming that she was not able to raise a child in the correct way. Because of the mistake she committed, they thought that Hester was unable to raise a child in a “Christian” way. Nonetheless, Hester defended her child, claiming that she (Pearl) was the only treasure she had in the world, and at the same time, they took from her almost everything away.

However, this rejection and judgement towards Hester Prynne was the reason why she became a revolutionary woman for the era she lived in. As a result of living far from the colony, she started to think, a pleasure that women had not obtained in that time. In addition, she was not the only character from the book that suffered from it. Hester Prynne reacted judgement in a whole new different way than people expected her to react. She returned all the bad comments, and the awful treatments with good works and a smile for everyone she approached.

She managed to survive through her sewing works; which is another matter that made her a woman ahead of her age, because the only one in charge of providing for his family was the man. It was seen as something completely wrong if a woman did that. She did charity to the poor and helped the ones who had a bigger necessity than her. There is actually a part in the book that stated that the scarlet letter on her chest, the stigma that was supposed to change her life for worst, gave her a special sensibility for the people who was

in pain and suffering. And she also recognized the ones who had a secret sin that burdened them.

How many of the people who did not hesitate to judge her was in a similar situation? A constant sin that it was not obvious to the eye of the rest of the people, but that had been torturing their souls. What happened to Hester was that her sin was evident, since a pregnancy is impossible to hide, but most of the “sinful behaviors” can be hidden. That is the reason why, it is madness to judge people because everybody is guilty of something somehow.

Anyhow, the scarlet letter transformed Hester in a free woman, with brand new thoughts, with a strong soul and ideas, a most important of all, it transformed her into a legend. However, Hester was not the only person who suffered from this awful judgement, her little Pearl did too. She was the product of a “disgusting sinful act.” So, it was predictable that she was an unwanted kid, since the beginning of her days. In a way, this was evident in Pearl’s personality. When her mother and her visited town, she defended her mother towards the awful looks of other children, and she screamed “demoniacally” to scare the kids away. The townspeople thought that Pearl was some kind of demon child and outcasted next to her mother as a symbol of sin.

5.2.3 To evaluate how the puritan ideology had a great influence in the book *The Scarlet Letter*

As it was said before, Nathaniel Hawthorne came from a very important puritan family. He was born in Salem, Massachusetts, one of the most prominent puritan villages back in those days. This was a factor greatly important in his career as a writer, and of course, in his literary pieces. He came from the “Hathorne” family, but he decided to

change his last name thanks to the fact the some of his ancestors were guilty of prosecution and murder of several people that did not believe in the same way they used to (n.d.) For example, his great-great grandfather William Hathorne was the responsible of ordering a Quaker woman to be whipped through the streets of Salem. As well as John Hathorne, who was one of the judges that condemned over twenty people of supposedly witchcraft, but at the end it was pure superstition. Therefore, Nathaniel Hawthorne's background was tainted by blood of innocent people and lots of torture (Nathaniel Hawthorne's Representation of the Puritan Society, 2016).

This fact was one of the main issues reflected on the *Scarlet Letter*. He had a fascination with thinking outside the box; outside the puritan standards and puritan laws of behavior and morale. In the book, the puritan theme is one of the most recurrent ones. Since the beginning, the "narrator" of the book described a clearly how the town was conformed, the people's clothes, their thoughts, among others, which highlighted several reflections of the puritan ideology. First, the town's conformation. A prison, the main street, the scaffold, the church. A basic puritan settlement. Continuing by a wide description of the people's expectation to see the newest sinner of the town. They wanted Hester to come out from prison, with the only purpose of staring at her with judgement. Some women were whispering that the punishment to which she was condemned was not enough and that she deserved a much harsher and cruel treatment.

Another important factor in which this ideology can be seen clearly, is in the hypocrisy surrounding the life of each and every single character in the novel. Nathaniel Hawthorne's objective was to highlight the worst parts of the puritan society, not for a matter of hatred towards it, but as a protest against the perception that the puritans had

about themselves; in other words, that they were ‘the chosen ones’ from God. Moreover, ~~and that~~ the majority of them thought that the rest of the non-puritan people were unworthy and undeserving of ~~of~~ God’s grace and mercy. Hawthorne also contrasted this dark side of the puritan society with the description that he made of the Holiday in New England (chapter 21). There, he described them as a colorful, glamorous, and joyful society. In summary, the book reflected Nathaniel Hawthorne’s way of seeing the society he had live in: a damage society, judgmental, hypocritical, vindictive, strict in all the ways possible, but still a society in which the majority of people’s purpose in life was to acknowledge God in their live and wanted to become closer to His path.

5.3 Restatement of the Research Question

It is important to remember that the research question in which this investigation was based on was, how did this ideology affect life of the main characters of the *Scarlet Letter*? Throughout the process of investigation, the question was successfully answered; therefore, it is not necessary to restate the question. In other words, it can be correctly answered because the puritan ideology was presented throughout the entire book in the life of every character, starting with Hester Prynne, who struggled with the constant judgement of the townspeople towards her and her little Pear.

Through Arthur Dimmesdale’s hypocritical attitude because first of all, he let Hester and his baby girl suffered discrimination and bad treatments for seven years, since the people’s opinion was too important for him and second due to the hypocritical life that he lived, led him to madness and death. Another example of the puritan ideology effect on ~~of~~ the character’s life in the *Scarlet Letter* is Roger Chillingworth, since revenge became the

one and only thought in his mind, his reason to live, and it transformed him into an evil man, constantly compared with the devil and all sorts of demoniac and evil forces.

5.4 Recommendations

The first recommendation would be to read a book that has a matter of interest to be related to. This is an exhaustive investigation, so it is necessary to read the book repeatedly and it is important to highlight the most important issues and topics regarding the approach that it will be chosen. Moreover, the second recommendation is to choose an interesting approach; in other words, a catchy approach that awakes the interest of the researcher and the readers of the investigation; an approach that can be able to transcend and penetrates within the researcher and the readers' mind and something that makes them meditate deeply in topics of social matter.

The last recommendation will be to dive deep in the *Scarlet Letter*, but with a different perspective. It could be based on a puritan approach completely, to dive within the depths of this fascinating ideology, or also a feminist approach, taking into count Hester Prynne as the main character of study, and how she was a revolutionary woman and a visionary for the she lived in. Moreover, it can be used the historical or bibliographic approach to have a better understanding of the book itself.

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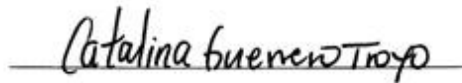
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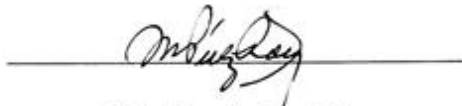
Anexos

Tribunal Examinador

Esta Tesina fue aprobada por el Tribunal Examinador de las Carreras de Inglés de la Universidad Internacional de las Américas, como requisito para optar por el grado de Bachiller en Inglés.



M.Sc. Catalina Guerrero Troyo
Tutor(a)



Licda. Margarita Pérez Roig
Lector/Lectora



M.Sc. Dinier Amador Serrano
Director de las Carreras de Inglés

Carta del Director de Carrera


San José, 22 de agosto de 2019

Señores
Universidad Internacional de las Américas
Estimados señores:

El suscrito M.Sc. Dinier Amador Serrano, Director de las Carreras de Inglés, hace constar que ha revisado la Tesina del estudiante, Gabriela Solano Solano, portador(a) de la cédula de identidad no. 1-1693-0592, que ha titulado: *Literary Analysis of Puritan Reflections in The Scarlet Letter through the Sociological Approach*.

La mencionada Tesina, responde a los requisitos exigidos en la Guía que nuestra carrera tiene para estos casos. Por tanto, se autoriza al autor para que lo presente ante el tribunal examinador nombrado para esta ocasión.

Atentamente,



M.Sc. Dinier Amador Serrano
Director de las Carreras de Inglés


Carta del LectorSan José, 22/08 del 2019

Máster
Dinier Amador Serrano
Director de las Carreras de Inglés
Universidad Internacional de las Américas

Estimado señor:

La estudiante Gabriela Solano Solano, portadora de la cédula de identidad no 1-1693-0592, ha presentado para su lectura y corrección de estilo la tesina denominada *Literary Analysis of some Puritan Reflections of The Scarlet Letter through a Sociological Approach*. He revisado y corregido la coherencia de los objetivos con el marco teórico, instrumentos y resultados, la calidad del trabajo y la relevancia del trabajo. Por lo tanto, hago constar que este se encuentra listo para ser presentado a la Universidad como trabajo de graduación.

Atentamente,


Margarita Pérez Roig
Lector (a) de Tesis