

Presentation of Supernatural Elements: A Comparative Study between *Macbeth* and *the Scarlet Letter*

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ABSTRACT: This paper examines and presents the diversified approaches towards the supernatural elements in select texts: *Macbeth* and *The Scarlet Letter*. While Shakespeare draws upon the royal stigma and social beliefs, Hawthorne moves on towards perpetuating social menaces through the composition. A subtle correlation can never be ignored that lies between the portrayal of these rudiments and the society, e.g. market demand, economic perspectives, values, ideologies, philosophical movements, and authoritative influence. Evaluating these two canonical texts in a comparative manner, the study proposes that the supernatural has not only been a mode of expressing gothic elements but also a mirror of the contemporary society. From a feminist point of view, the inclination towards portraying only the females as the witches vis-a-vis the negative entities also gathers much attention. This study also proposes that the social norms and values have a linear correlation in respect to age and time.

KEYWORDS: Shakespeare, Hawthorne, Supernatural Elements, Seventeenth-Century Society, Puritanism

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I. INTRODUCTION

Both William Shakespeare and Nathaniel Hawthorne are the most influential and legendary figures in the history of the English literature though they are from different areas of the world. Shakespeare is the playwright of Elizabethan England and Hawthorne is the novelist of the nineteenth century USA (earlier known as New England). As eminent figures, both of them have gained fame and admiration around the world. Their writings are staged and translated in many parts of the universe. It could be comprehended that their writings are different in many ways, e.g. societal, political, economic, familial, and feminism. This paper aims to identify the differences portrayed through the pieces of Shakespeare and Hawthorne in terms of supernatural elements.

Shakespeare's genius and intellectual are universally accepted. His uniqueness lies in his equal importance on the tragic and the comic, the sentimental and the burlesque, versification, characterisation, and study of female and of male. However, as Jonson duly notes, the most notable one is that he has not confined himself in his own age, rather he supersedes his age. He is also known as the father of English drama since the template provided by his plays became the one that seeped into all subsequent forms more than anything before it. He is known as Bard of Avon.

Shakespeare (baptised 26 April 1564 – 23 April 1616) composes *Macbeth* during the reign of King James I although he is often referred as an Elizabethan poet. Dealing with various issues such as murder, betrayal, power, and lust, he also employs supernatural elements as the driving force which vividly depicts the picture of the contemporary England as well as the socio-political stature. Shakespeare, the creator of 39 plays, 154 sonnets, two long narrative poems, and a few other verses, utilises supernatural elements in his plays to reveal the ambitious attitudes of different people in the court. He works with witches, goddess, ghosts, spirits, and apparitions as supernatural forces in *Macbeth*. It has been frequently observed that the Bard deploys the supernatural as a means of accomplishing the protagonist's reflection of mind, illusion, hallucination, and also for dramatic effects. Given that every literary piece beacons its age, this study also explores the presentation of these rudiments as the mirror of beliefs and values of Shakespeare's England. Nevertheless, his presentation is remarkably dissimilar compared to the giveaway of Hawthorne's supernatural forces in *The Scarlet Letter*.

Hawthorne (July 04, 1804 - May 19, 1864), the American novelist and short story writer of 19th century, is well known for his novels *The Scarlet Letter* and *The House of Seven Gables*. His exertion of allegory and symbolism elevate him as one of the most canonical authors of his time. Although he belonged to the 19th century, *The Scarlet Letter* offers a setting of the 17th century puritan community in Massachusetts. Comprising Hester's adultery and struggle, Hawthorne picturises the supernatural elements as a part of the 17th century societal values and beliefs, but in a different way from that of Shakespeare in *Macbeth*. Mistress Hibbins the Witch, indication of ghosts, the character Pearl as an elf child and the character of Hester, and some

of the instances are supernatural elements in the novel. The goal of this paper is to show how the novelist interprets these forces in his novel and what messages these devices bear in this piece of writing.

II. THE SUPERNATURAL: DEFINITION

The word “supernatural” derives from the Latin word “supernaturalis” which means beyond nature. Naturalists maintain that nothing beyond the physical world exists, and point to a lack of reliable evidence for anything supernatural, and hence, maintain sceptical attitudes towards supernatural concepts (Kurtz 15). Such elements are often orchestrated in many other contexts, e.g. occult religions (Lachapelle 47). In fine, the supernatural refers to any event or entity that defy natural order or scientific exploration. Gods and deities, ghosts, spirits, apparitions, and witches are some common modes of entity that the authors have employed over time to attain to the supernatural forces. Authors tend to sketch through these elements to cater a vivid and dramatic imagery through their libretti. Many of them include supernatural elements as a driving force of writing. These elements might guide central themes. Another reason of demonstrating supernatural elements in one’s writing is to expose his societal beliefs, values, and norms. These can also draw a conclusion by examining its comparison and contrast with pieces of literature of different ages.

III. DISCUSSION ON MACBETH

Shakespeare, in *Macbeth*, presents supernatural elements in such a way that reflects the then society. He always tries to maintain an environment of fear and anxiety that prevails in that very society. Maintaining that the bard attempts to create a societal portrayal through these images, a handful of other convoluted aspects can be bestowed upon the alibi. Hence, the conclusion can be drawn that the supernatural gets a manifold voice, e.g. to present the picture of the society, to please the king, to illustrate the reference of classical antiquity, and to bring the human nature of greed into daylight.

Shakespeare composes this five-act tragedy sometime in 1606 to 1607. It is very true that every literary piece reflects its age very specifically. Shakespeare’s tragedies are not exception. His famous and widely read tragedy *Macbeth* presents supernatural agents in such a way that these elements picturise the then English society before the readers clearly and pinpointedly. The readers may have the question in mind that the witches are not supernatural elements since the witches literally mean the magicians in villages. However, Shakespeare a vivid description of the witches’ physical appearance and their time of presence to make prophesy on the future success of Macbeth which proves that they are not the village women but the supernatural creatures. In order to reflect the age, Shakespeare opens his tragedy with the appearance of the three witches in Act I, Scene I.

ACT I

SCENE I. A desert place

Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches

First Witch

When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

Second Witch

When the hurlyburly's done,
When the battle's lost and won.

Third Witch

That will be ere the set of sun.

First Witch

Where the place?

Second Witch

Upon the heath.

Third Witch

There to meet with Macbeth.

First Witch

I come, Graymalkin!

Second Witch

Paddock calls.

Third Witch

Anon.

ALL

Fair is foul, and foul is fair:
Hover through the fog and filthy air.

Exeunt. (Shakespeare 128-129)

Again, their physical appearance also proves that they are not earthly beings. Even Banquo and Macbeth get puzzled when they appear in front of them to make prophecy of their fortune.

BANQUO

... What are these

So wither'd and so wild in their attire,
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on't? Live you? or are you aught
That man may question? You seem to understand me,
By each at once her chappy finger laying
Upon her skinny lips: you should be women,
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
That you are so. (Shakespeare 140-141)

These witches have a direct connection with the goddess Hecate which also proves that they are not human beings. Their projection is accompanied by stormy weathers or disturbing situations always to arouse fear in the minds of readers.

At first, in this scene, Macbeth and Banquo discuss the strange encounter as they have doubts inside their minds about the witches' foretelling. By the arrival of a messenger, their conversation is interrupted and they come to know that Macbeth has been selected as the Thane of Cowdor, since the former Thane is to be executed for treason. After getting the truthfulness of the prophesy made by the witches, Macbeth becomes over ambitious to become a king. In this instance, Shakespeare also gives it a touch of reality as the event is associated with the execution of Henry Garnet for complicity in the gunpowder plot of 1605 (Leggatt 8). He writes this tragedy by relating it to the real world so that the audience feels interested to watch it.

Then in Act II, Scene I, Macbeth has a vision of a dagger floating in the air before him and its handle pointing towards his hand with its tip directing him towards Duncan in the darkened hall after the departure of Banquo and Fleance. Although this is interpreted as a hallucination by different critics (Johnston 225), it has been used by Shakespeare for creating a dramatic effect for which he prepares his audience (Lemon 74). Since the people are already the believers in supernatural forces, the playwright retains their interest in this drama. Macbeth even wonders whether what he sees is real or a

A dagger of the mind, a false creation

Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain? (p.175)

In Act III, Scene IV, there appears the ghost of Banquo. Macbeth deceives Banquo through an invitation to a feast and kills him in the way to the palace. After returning to his guests, Macbeth becomes horror struck by finding out Banquo's ghost sitting on his chair. Although this is excluded by defining it as delusion of Macbeth as he is the person affected by schizophrenia after killing different people who seem threatening to him, this is also an example of Shakespeare's skill to present the picture of the then society.

If one sets a look on 16th and 17th century England, one can get an elaborate knowledge of how the societal values and norms are mostly influenced by the belief in supernatural agents. On 05 December 1484, the pope Innocent VIII was compelled to issue a Bull which was later becoming a basis for witch-hunting during the 16th and 17th centuries. The Bull was about the activity of the agents of evil as they came to be termed by the church "it has recently come to our ears (...) that many persons of both sexes, heedless of their own salvation and forsaking the catholic faith, give themselves over to devils and by their incantations, charms and conjurings, ruin and cause to perish the offspring of women, the foal of animals, the products of the earth... (Guiley 174-175).

Coleridge even comments on Shakespeare's use of supernatural beings: "They were awful beings, and blended in themselves the Fates and Furies of the ancients with the sorceresses of Gothic and popular superstition. They were mysterious natures; fatherless, motherless, sexless." (Albright 146). Sinha connects this to the societal setting stating that "The mind of the Elizabethan was steeped deep in superstition, and they liked very much to see the ghosts, faeries, and witches appear on the stage, the Elizabethan dramatists picked up any opportunity to cater to this vulgar sensationally crude taste of the audience. Shakespeare too makes a free and unashamed use of the supernatural both in his comedies and tragedies" (154-155).

Shakespeare uses supernatural elements for another reason which is to show the animal nature in human beings. Aristotle stresses the element of purpose. Just like human beings, the state is naturally endowed with a distinctive function. Combining these two ideas, Aristotle says it is evident that the state is a creature of nature, and that human beings are by nature political animals (Pellegrin 34-37). Shakespeare wants to show that the supernatural elements are here working as catalyst. Macbeth is in his mind the desire for grasping the throne. For this reason, he seeks a golden opportunity to propagate the crime. According to Freudian psychology, the balance between Id, Ego, and Superego creates a sense of rationality in humans (Gomez 99-101). Animals have no such drives. So, they have no need to restrain their desires. Again, Nietzsche says, "the strongest and highest will to life does not find expression in a miserable, but in a will to war. A will to Power, a will to overpower!" (DeMarco and Wiker 41). Macbeth has under his mind the will to power and even to overpower. He even tries

to uproot all of the family members of Banquo because the witches prophesize that Banquo's descendants will be the future kings.

Macbeth's composition date indicates that this is undoubtedly a literary piece of renaissance age. There must have some reflections of the renaissance age. The portrait of the goddess Hecate and her influence over the witches reminds us the ancient literature like Homer's *Iliad* and Virgil's *Aeneid*. In *Iliad*, the gods and goddesses are the characters who behave like human beings in this epic. They have consequently taken part in war side by side with the human beings. Referring to Longinus, Lattimore states that "Homer seems to me, in recording the wounds of the gods, their conflicts, deeds of vengeance, tears and bindings, all source of mixed passions, to have as much as possible made the man of the *Iliad* gods, and the gods men" (41). There is hardly any difference between human beings and gods and goddesses. Through these lines, it becomes obvious that Shakespeare has also provided one of the characteristics by presenting Hecate as one of the elements of supernatural forces.

Additionally, Shakespeare hints the patriarchal dominance of that very society if the tragedy is analysed from feminist perspective. Stallybrass (cited in Leonard 70) argues: Witchcraft in *Macbeth...* is not simply a reflection of a pre-given order of things; rather, it is a particular working upon, and legitimation of the hegemony of patriarchy. Shakespeare, in this play, shows the witches as the guide who instigate Macbeth to work in favour of fulfilling his ambition to be the future king by killing Duncan. The witches here can also be compared with Satan in Milton's *Paradise Lost* who, in the disguise of a serpent, convinces Eve to eat the fruit from the forbidden tree and persuades her to feed Adam to taste the fruit.

To whom the Tempter guilefully replied.

Indeed! Hath God then said that of the fruit

Of all these garden trees ye shall not eat,

Yet Lords declared of all in earth or air? (Milton 655-658)

Shakespeare also uses the female characters like the weird sisters and Lady Macbeth to persuade Macbeth to commit the crime. It proves that Shakespeare shows that all the evils done by the women. Men are not responsible for any evil-doing, they are only the victims in the hands of women. For this reason, though Macbeth commits some villainous action, the reader feels pity for him because they have in mind that he is only the puppet in the hands of the witches and Lady Macbeth.

Moreover, the main source of this tragedy is *Holinshed's Chronicle* where Macbeth, Banquo, Macduff are the real people from Scotland. In this chronicle, the history that served as the source for *Macbeth*, Banquo was Macbeth's accomplice in Duncan's murder. Shakespeare most likely changed Banquo's role from villain to moral pillar because Shakespeare's patron, King James I of England, was believed to be Banquo's descendant. It also seems that Shakespeare writes this drama in order to please the king who had a keen interest in the witches. Even James I writes "Daemonologie", an essay where he makes it clear that the then society itself is full of superstitions: "Sorceresses can make men and women love or hate one another; they can raise storms, in the measure that God will permit it. They can render the man maniacal; they can dispatch spirits to haunt men and houses; they can cause people to be possessed. The witch's evil is inflicted upon sinners as a punishment, upon godly people who are guilty of a great sin or exhibit weakness in faith, and also upon the best, in order to try their patience" (James I 412).

IV. DISCUSSION ON THE SCARLET LETTER

Hawthorne, although deals with the 17th century society as the setting of his novel, tries to show the picture of that very society through the eyes of the 18th century onlookers. Hawthorne's interest in antiquity and the puritan past of New England must have drawn his attention to an actual event well known in Salem. In 1688, the Salem law court records the punishment of one Hester Crawford who was publicly whipped for having had an affair with John Wadg (Hawthorne and O'Brien 9). Hawthorne's ancestor, William Hathorne, had supervised this sentence. In "The Custom House" which is introductory to this novel, he makes it very clear that he is composing his piece on the basis of a true historical story of Hester Crawford. He writes this novel by changing the name of Hester Crawford into Hester Prynne.

After Christopher Columbus, on an attempt to reach India through the West, had accidentally discovered America in 1492, the Spaniards were the first Europeans to settle there in the sixteenth century, followed by the English, the French, and the Dutch. Following the collapse of the Commonwealth (1642-1660) established by Oliver Cromwell, the great Puritan rulers of England for 16 years (1642-1658), king Charles II was restored to the throne of England. The Puritans were the avowed enemies of the Royal family, and so, the Puritans were hounded out of important political, religious, and civic posts in England at the time of the return of Charles II. However, there was a search for a New Home and after a number of half-attempts and failures, the Puritan Fathers finally landed in Massachusetts in 1620. These Puritan settlers brought with them a harsh and unrelenting code of conduct for religious and private life. Since they lived in an alien land, they were suspicious not only of outsiders like the Spaniards and the Dutch, but also of the Red Indian whom they

considered the child of Satan because of their red skin, different civilisation and hostility towards the European settlers. Any attempts towards freedom in private, civic, or religious matters was considered by them as betrayal of the whole society and a certain sternness and austerity were set up as ideals if a society like this had to survive in alien and hostile conditions. Small settlements were considered the foci of civilisation and the wilderness around these settlements were considered the area belonging to the Devil (the Black man). The forest was the scene of the Devil's authority, and witches and black-magicians were supposed to meet in the forests at night. People in these villages were often condemned by the majority as witches in league with the Black man of the forest and punished, either by being executed or by being put in the stocks. Witch-hunting and the condemnation and punishment of the dissidents was a favourite sport of this entertainment-starved people.

As we know that each literature mirrors its age, Hawthorne condemns the beliefs and values of the 17th century society because he tries to explore on the basis of cosmopolitanism of the 18th and 19th century Americans, Emerson's and Thoreau's transcendentalism, effects of industrial revolution. Through the analysis of different incidents, setting, and characters, a notable difference can be found out between the ages of the two remarkable writers. *The Scarlet Letter* is originally an attempt to understand the 17th century society through the eyes of the 19th century.

In *The Scarlet Letter*, Mistress Hibbins is treated by the people of the Puritan settlement as a witch who is supposed to have an intimate relationship with the Black man. In chapter VIII, Hawthorne (91) introduces Hibbins as "Governor Bellingham's bitter-tempered sister, and the same who, a few years later, was executed as a witch". Mistress Hibbins was a real figure of the 17th century England. Hawthorne depicts the picture of Mistress Hibbins on the basis of the real figure Ann Hibbins. Ann Hibbins was executed for witchcraft in Boston, Massachusetts on June 19, 1656. Her death by hanging was the third for witchcraft in Boston, predated the Salem witch trial in 1692 (Evans and Bartholomew 561). In this novel, Hawthorne wants to show that people, who are condemned by the populace and want to stay alone, are put aside as witches in the 17th century society. Mistress Hibbins has a very intuitive nature as is seen in "Dost thou think I have been to the forest so many times, and have yet no skill to judge who else has been there? Yea; though no leaf of the wild garlands, which they wore while they danced, be left in their hair! I know thee, Hester; for I behold the token. We may all see it in the sunshine; and it glows like a red flame in the dark. Thou wearest it openly; so there need be no question about that. But this minister! Let me tell thee in thine ear! When the Black Man sees one of his own servants, signed and sealed, so shy of owning to the bond as is the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale, he hath a way of ordering matters so that the mark shall be disclosed in open daylight to the eyes of all the world! What is it that the minister seeks to hide, with his hand always over his heart? Ha, Hester Prynne!" (188). In fact, Hibbins, the bad -tempered sister of Governor Bellingham, introduces the repressed Puritan settlement. She makes a comment when she sees Dimmesdale coming from the forest stating that "so, reverend Sir, you have made a visit into the forest," observed the witch-lady, nodding her high head-dress at him. "The next time, I pray you to allow me only a fair warning, and I shall be proud to bear you company. Without taking overmuch upon myself, my good word will go far towards gaining any strange gentleman a fair reception from yonder potentate you wot of!" (172).

Through these lines, Hawthorne wants to portray the prejudice of the puritan community about the connection of Hibbins with the Black man in the because the novelist never gives any hint of the presence of the Black man in the forest. The readers already know that Dimmesdale meets Hester in the forest on his way back from his visit of st. Apostle. Moreover, Hawthorne tries to convince the reader that the devil actually lies in one's own heart by depicting the character of Roger Chillingworth.

Chillingworth, the husband of Hester, has been mentioned many times as the Black man. In chapter 4(The Interview), the readers discover him as a physician who enters into the jail in order to examine Hester and her child in prison as Hester suffers from nervous breakdown after standing on the scaffold as her punishment of committing adultery. Although he is in disguise of a physician to the Puritan authority and the people of this settlement, he is here to enquire into the name of Hester's co-partner whose name Hester is unwilling to disclose. Since he taunts her while leaving because of his failure to bring out the name of Hester's fellow sinner, Hester is troubled and asks him: "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 that will prove the ruin of my soul? (62). Again, in chapter 9, the people of the settlement rumoured that Chillingworth's real name was not Chillingworth: There was an aged handicraftsman, it is true, who had been a citizen of London at the period of Sir Thomas Overbury's murder, now some thirty years ago; he testified to having seen the physician, under some other name, which the narrator of the story had now forgotten, in company with Doctor Forman, the famous old conjurer, who was implicated in the affair of Overbury. (100). In this statement, the novelist shows the prejudice inside the minds of the Puritan community because they have established a connection between Chillingworth and Overbury's murder as this is a historical real story where: Weston industriously delivered to Overbury a number of poisons contained in such things as "Tarts and Jellies" and finally within a "Glyster," or enema. These poisons were arranged by a Mrs. Anne Turner, a confidant of the Countess's, who had possibly familial connections to the astrologer Simon Forman, and were supplied by an

apothecary named James Franklin (Poltrack). Other inhabitants of this settlement also think that Chillingworth learns art of black magic from the Red Indians while imprisoned by them. They also come to a conclusion that the fire in Chillingworth's laboratory comes from the lower depth of the earth that is hell. Hawthorne clarifies the character of Chillingworth as "calm in temperament, kindly, though not of warm affections, but ever, in all his relations with the world, a pure and upright man." (102). He has been turned into an avenger because he has been betrayed by his beautiful wife Hester who has given birth to a child, Pearl who is the fruit of an adulterous relationship the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale.

Hester Prynne, after committing crime, becomes very intuitive in nature. "She shuddered to believe, yet could not help believing, that it gave her a sympathetic knowledge of the hidden sin in other hearts. She was terror-stricken by the revelations that were thus made." (69). Her mind is so delved into superstition that she even is in confusion whether there is some bad angel's influence over her or not. She asks herself "Could they be other than the insidious whispers of the bad angel?" (69). In reality, her intuitive sympathies have been grown up out of her sorrows and sufferings. The author explores that her long-term spiritual tortures give her a crucial point to watch sin in every human heart like the Young Goodman Brown in *Young Goodman Brown*. The novelist draws the real picture of a society where the higher authorities are not even morally pure as is seen in Dimmesdale too. Although Hester's natural feeling and upbringing make her believe that the Devil is whispering bad things into her ear because Satan may have a hold upon her, the novelist captures the real scenario of a human society of the 17th century and tries to deliver the message that there is no such things as devil or bad angel. The human beings can be devil or angel as everything depends upon a human being's conscience. Hester's life has been turned from a life of passion into reason and thought because "she assumed a freedom of speculation, then common enough on the other side of the Atlantic, but which our forefathers, had they known of it, would have held to be a deadlier crime than that stigmatised by the scarlet letter." (129). And "In her deepest heart, she can never accept the puritan rules and becomes a rebel against the rules." (Wang 894). She is "a feminist in advance of the season" (Warren 29). Her child, Pearl also represents some of her characteristics.

Pearl, the child of Arthur Dimmesdale and Hester Prynne, is interpreted by different critics as a symbol: Pearl's artistic effect of ambiguity is achieved by her symbolism of truth, symbolism of grace, symbolism of the New World, and individuality (Wang 376). Another critic also says "... Pearl is the best vehicle to express Puritanism and reflects Hawthorne's idea towards love and morality" (Zhao 658). Hawthorne projects the society through the depiction of the character Pearl too. The author even entitles chapter 8 as "The Elf Child and the Minister" to show the 17th century society's beliefs. John Wilson compares Pearl with a bird and expresses his wonders "... Or art thou one of those naughty elfs or fairies, whom we thought to have left behind us, with other relics of Papistry, in merry old England?" (86). Because Pearl has not been taught religion yet at this early age. The authority wants to catch away Pearl from Hester in order to give her religious teaching. Hester, guided by her Puritan mindset, even expresses her suspicion whether she is an elf child or not. One afternoon in a summer's day whenever Pearl is playing with Hester, she gathers a handful of wild- flowers and throws them at her mother's bosom where the scarlet letter is. Hester asks Pearl whose child she is. Pearl replies "Oh, I am your little Pearl! Answered the child. But, while she said it, Pearl laughed and began to dance up and down, with the humoursome gesticulation of a little imp, whose next freak might be to fly up the chimney" (77). Hester pretends to be joking although she is serious and says "Thou art not my child! Thou art no Pearl of mine!" (78). Then Hester makes an inquiry about Pearl's knowledge of her creator. Pearl throws the same question to Hester. "Thy Heavenly Father sent Thee!" (78) answers Hester Prynne. Pearl, noticing Hester's hesitation, replies "He did not send me! Cried she, positively. I have no Heavenly Father!" (78). Hester tries to pacify Pearl by making the same remarks again but Pearl continues to show her stubbornness. In this case, Hester remembers the conversation between two of the inhabitants who says that Pearl was the child of the Devil. The author, here, gives a reference to Martin Luther who was supposed to be the Devil's son by the society. Hawthorne's message is to convey that people, who do not conform to the society, are condemned as Devil's child by the society because he is greatly influenced by transcendentalism. Such delineation can be traced back to the advocates of transcendentalism who "believed in the inherent goodness within nature. Nature was a harmonious unity. Emerson even went so far as to deny the existence of evil, which he defined as nothing more than the absence of good. For Emerson, good only had to appear and evil dissipated, as light overcomes darkness. Every human being possessed this inner knowledge of the good and an equal capacity for goodness" (Phillips and Ladd 58). Referring to Emerson, Andrews (114) upholds that "society and its institutions, such as organized religion and political parties, corrupted the purity of the individual. He believed that each individual remained purer and truer to himself when he communicated directly with God". The novelist shows Pearl as a very normal child because "Nathaniel depicts Una 's character in Pearl, the divine child now on the border of the demonic, because of her parents' sin..., the language and behavior of the child characters in the story parallels the language and behavior of Una and Julian in their father's journal..." (The Nathaniel Hawthorne Review 20) and he has a very deep understanding of child psychology. Children at a very early age cannot utter a full sentence but they can make sounds. So, the cries of Pearl in an unknown language is an evidence of this

characteristic of a child because she has combined sounds to rebuke the children who tease her mother and herself. Pearl also plays a game of make believe which also reveals the childlike characteristics of Pearl as a normal human being. Since Pearl is a very little child, she is driven by Id defined as "... an unconscious energy force that seeks pleasure and gratification" (Pastorino and Doyle-Portillo 469). She wants to play with other children of the community as a child but her desire has been suppressed by the Puritan society. She has been repeatedly insulted by the other children when she goes with her mother to serve the people in the village. So, aggression has been naturally grown up inside the minds of Pearl against other human children. Her games of cutting of the weeds off express her hatred towards the children because in her imagination, the tall pine trees are the big Puritans and "... the ugliest weeds of the garden were their children..." (75). So, it is very clear that Hawthorne projects Pearl in such a way to reveal the superstitious minds of that very community and this superstition is also evident in the portrayal of the character of Ann Hutchinson.

People in town have a firm belief that the rose-bush had "...sprung up under the footsteps of the sainted Ann Hutchinson..." (40). Ann Hutchinson was a spiritual adviser, and an important participant in Massachusetts Bay Colony from 1636 to 1638. Like Hester, she wants to stand beside the women of that very Puritan society and her religious views are against that very society because she is in contrast with these authoritative rulers since the Puritan society ultimately follows the beliefs of Catholicism. Since she had confidence and guts to protest against the discrepancies of that very society, she was eventually tried and convicted as a witch, then banished from the colony with many of her supporters. Here can also be taken another instance through which the author marks a balance between 17th and 19th century society. In chapter 2, the conversation among the women propels a light on the Puritan psychology. The ugliest woman in the crowd demands the harshest punishment for Hester. The youngest and the softest woman sympathises with Hester and says, "Do not let her hear you! Not a stitch in that embroidered letter, but she has felt it in her heart" (45). Through this conversation, the author imprints a picture of the 17th century Puritan society through the ugliest woman and the 19th century society through the sympathetic woman. He wants to imprint how rigid the Puritan society was. Human relationships have no value to them. People, who want freedom and think differently, are considered as witches by the then society and the also seem to have some connections with the supernatural elements like Satan, Devil, or the Black man.

Hawthorne's standpoint can also be more clarified through two incidents. Through Dimmesdale's hallucinations whenever he delivers a soliloquy "Now came the dead friends of his youth, and his white-bearded father, with a saint-like frown, and his mother, turning her face away as she passed by. Ghost of a mother, - thinnest fantasy of a mother, - methinks she might yet have thrown a pitying glance towards her son!" (114), the novelist shows that no such things like supernatural elements. Those are the imaginations of a sick mind. Maybe he is a patient of Schizophrenia, "a disabling disease in which those affected experience altered thoughts, perceptions, emotions, and behaviours" (Tsuang, Faraone and Glatt 1). The minister is in a state of depression and anxiety because he is the paramour of Hester. He is not able to reveal the truth because of his social position of a priest in society. Dimmesdale's inner suffering and the psychological torture turns himself in almost madness. The supernatural feelings of Dimmesdale reveal through his hallucination where he imagines different people with whom he has a very strong bondage. In another incident, Dimmesdale approaches the scaffold in the market place where Hester along with her child stood seven years ago for being publicly ashamed as a part of her torture. While standing on the scaffold, he feels "... as if the universe were gazing at a scarlet token on his naked breast, right over his heart" (117). He mistakes the light in the hands of John Wilson as a halo left behind by the holy spirit of the dead Governor. Then he, after hearing the sounds of Pearl's laughter, invites Hester and Pearl who are coming from the Governor Winthrop's house, to stand on the scaffold with him. Whenever the three makes an electric chain, a meteor flashes in the sky and the whole place is brightened with the light of the flash in the dark sky. And to Dimmesdale, the shape of the meteor represents the letter A on the bosom of Hester Prynne. The next day, a Sexton, who is a church official in-charge of the village graveyard, hands over the black glove to the minister which is found "... this morning, on the scaffold, where evil-doers are set up to public shame" (124). This Sexton remarks, "And, since Satan saw fit to steal it, your reverence must needs handle him without gloves, henceforward" (124). The readers know that this is not the act of Stan. Dimmesdale himself forgets about the glove which had been dropped beside the scaffold. So, here is a dramatic irony set by the novelist to show the contrast between the people's superstitious beliefs and the reality. Again, the Sexton tells about a great red letter in the sky "For, as our good Governor Winthrop was made an angel this past night, it was doubtless held fit that there should be some notice thereof!" (124). So, here Hawthorne tries to say that perception varies from person to person. The novelist visualise that supernatural elements are the creation of human minds.

V. CONCLUSION

Nonetheless, it can never be overlooked that Shakespeare and Hawthorne have unquestionable significance whenever it comes to the study of English literature, be it British or American. The manners they

have adapted in terms of painting the supernatural have various junctures that need to be addressed through critical eyes. The change in outlook with the advent of time and period should be scrutinised vividly. Where Shakespeare attempts to depict the supernatural as an inseparable part of life as well as human conscience, Hawthorne moves the pendulum towards human nature eluding that the evil and the good dwell amongst the humans.

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