DARK AND FAIR LADIES IN HAWTHORNE'S FICTION

Manuela López Ramírez
Universidad de Valencia
https://dx.doi.org/10.12795/futhark.2007.i02.07

Abstract

The Dark and the Fair Lady are traditional stereotypes of Gothic fiction, which have reflected the social tensions of the society towards the role of the female, especially her sexuality. The Dark Lady is the embodiment of a demonic and subversive power, which allows her to trespass the limits of the patriarchal order. Conversely, the Fair Maiden represents the standard of the female as given in the "Cult of True Womanhood:" a pure and submissive woman. Hawthorne takes over these old images and transforms them to analyze gender relations and the complex personality of the female. On one hand, Hawthorne's dark ladies—Beatrice, Hester, Zenobia and Miriam—stand for a transgressive womanhood. They are passionate creatures whose life force makes them fallible: full and complex characters who are finally defeated. On the other hand, his fair maidens—Phoebe, Priscilla and Hilda—have a more conservative role. Their spirituality and perfection are usually associated with insubstantiality and hardly believable idealization, a male's dream. Hawthorne deals with both stereotypes ambiguously. He shows us how "the myth of the American Eve," as either fair or dark, reflects the social prejudices of the nineteenth century. Even though Hawthorne expresses admiration for his demonic females, he destroys or contains their transgression. As for his light ladies, they appear as the right mates for the fictional heroes, but they never become true women. Hawthorne creates a complex characterization for each one of his females, which enrich and question the old images of the Dark and the Fair Lady.

> It is the merit of Hawthorne and Melville [. . .] that they describe heroines and primitive people as neither saints nor demons but as ambiguous human beings. Where they do take over the old images of dark and fair lady, [. . .] they do so with a special purpose: to question or reinterpret the images or even to reverse their values completely.
> KRISTIN HERZOG, *Women, Ethnics, and Exotics: Images of Power in Mid-Nineteenth-Century American Fiction.*

The paradoxical social views of the woman in the nineteenth century resonate in their roles in Gothic fiction. The Victorian conception of the female's sexuality is behind them. The heroine of the gothic romance often falls into two stereotypes: the Dark Lady and the Fair Maiden. While the Fair Maiden succeeds, the Dark Lady is usually constrained or even annihilated: "in a formulaic genre such as the Gothic [. . .] the duel of abstractions between the Dark and Light Women reveals the attempt to confine, even destroy, the demonic woman and her powers of metamorphosis."[1] On one hand, the Fair Lady has traditionally had the conventional role of the Gothic fiction. She responds to the "Cult of True Womanhood," which was the standard in the society of the time:[2]

---

[1] GROSS, Louis S., p. 39.

[2] For more information about True Womanhood, see: Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," *American Quarterly*, 18 (Summer 1966) (rpt. in her book *Dimitry Convictions: The American Woman in the Nineteenth Century,* Athens, Ohio University Press, 1976*)*, pp. 21-41. She bases her conclusions mostly on important women's magazines, on gift books, religious tracts, sermons, cookbooks, diaries, and autobiographies. Welter's article on True Womanhood should be read together with her other articles in *Dimitry Convictions*, since she develops the complexity of the feminization process and the gains women obtained despite the

women should be pious, pure, passive and submissive. Fair Maidens' stature usually lays on their moral impeccability, their virtually no knowledge of evil. They embody the Victorian ideal of stainless womanhood: women defined by their sexual honor, virginity. They are Eves before the fall.

The White Heroine is shown as devoid of passion to reinforce the social idea that women were basically "pure." She has an important moral role of ennobling men: to be their salvation. Her function is "to preserve the sanctity of the home life, the private sphere to which their mates could return and be refreshed after venturing out into the contaminating world of commercial competition."[3] The desexualizing image of the nineteenth-century fictional woman goes hand in hand with her role as a mother and pure Angel in the House. In fact, maternal and sexual impulses were somehow irreconcilable due to the laws and customs of the society of the time. According to Lawrence Stone, "by committing adultery a woman lost all moral and legal rights as a mother, and was by definition unfit to have custody of her children. A wife convicted, or merely accused, of adultery could be virtually certain that she would never be permitted to set eyes on her children" (171). Besides, females' asexuality was also the consequence of the changing socio-economic conditions. The growing wealth implied new property and made it more important to establish the appropriate lines of succession and inheritance. Women's chastity was essential to guarantee them. Mary Poovey argues that females' celibacy was of vital importance to society, since "Upon that all the property in the world depends. We hang a thief for stealing a sheep; but the unchastity of a woman transfer sheep, and farm and all, from the right owner" (6).

---

limitations they suffered. See also: Herbert Ross Brown, *The Sentimental Novel in America 1789-1860,* New York, Pageant Books, 1959.

[3] CLEMENS, Valdine, p. 117.

The powerless and vulnerable Fair Lady was the reflection of the tamed and controlled woman of the patriarchal society: "Submissiveness[4] is a key personality trait of the persecuted Gothic maiden well into the nineteenth century."[5] Syndy McMillen Conger considers these heroines as "physically slight, emotionally passive, and intellectually ill-trained" (94). Fair Women only show positive resistance when confronting villainous behavior and it usually takes a puerile form. The White Maiden's safeguarding weapons are empty threats, unanswered prayers, unheard shrieks: the defense of those who are convinced that they are powerless. Through the stereotype of the Fair Lady, gothic stories usually affirm conventional middle-class domestic values: women devoted to their household, while men had the economic and social power.[6] The importance of the female at home tried to compensate for her exclusion from the public arena and provided her with the purity that the state of motherhood required.[7]

---

[4] For the importance of submissiveness see: Patricia Meyer Spacks, "The Dangerous Age," in CANFIELD, J. Douglas; and HUNTER, J. Paul. (eds.), *Rhetorics of Order/Ordering Rhetorics in English Neoclassical Literature,* Newark, Del., University of Delaware Press, 1989, pp. 417-438, and Katharine M. Rogers, *The Troublesome Helpmate: A History of Misogyny in Literature,* Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1966.

[5] CONGER, Syndy McMillen, p. 93.

[6] Even though these stereotypes of true womanhood and the glorification of domesticity could seem ridiculous and, in fact, they limited women's social and economic possibilities, they also meant a great advance for women who previously had had to work outdoors in very harsh conditions to struggle for the survival of their families and themselves.

[7] Representative of these ideas is Harriet Beecher Stowe's description of the virtues of the housewife in religious terms: the Christian home is the "appointed shrine for woman, more holy than cloister, more saintly and pure than church or altar [. . .] Priestess, wife, and mother, there she ministers daily in holy works of household peace." (Qtd. in Herbert Ross Brown's *The Sentimental Novel in 1789-1860*, p. 281).

On the contrary, the Dark Lady, the *femme fatale*, embodies less conventional and more transgressive meanings than the Fair Lady. The demonic woman of the Gothic tradition shows the patriarchal ambivalence towards the female:[8] it is mostly through her that the return of the repressed is equated to the woman, the Other of the Western culture. The Dark Lady's subversive character is revealed in her rejection of the Father's law, which makes her go beyond the constraints of social and religious definitions of womanhood questioning communal constructs once considered immutable. As Hugo McPherson argues, "This so-called 'monstrous' woman is peculiarly the plague of sun men, particularly Puritans" (234). The Dark Lady of tradition is usually guiltless, but when men keep denying her, she may become a destructive force, which haunts men's dreams. The demonic woman displays an independent and defiant spirit, passion and moral fallibility. The *femme fatale*'s vitality and her rebellious character are transmitted through her identification with nature, with ethnic or exotic elements, with the wild, and ultimately with sex. As a passionate creature, a sinful temptress, the Dark Woman is associated with unleashed sexual desire: she becomes impure, a "fallen woman." Female sexuality appears as the focus of male horror.[9] Sexual passion was considered as dangerous, since it meant a threat to patriarchal institutions, especially the marriage and the family. Dark Ladies would be punished for expressing their overt sexual desire. They are demonic characters who have an alliance with the devil. The villainy of the *femme fatale* has been limitless in many important gothic works. There are memorable dark ladies, such as Matilda in Matthew Lewis's *The Monk*; old

[8] GROSS, Louis S., p. 38.

[9] Hugo McPherson claims that "Freudian critics would have it that she [the 'female monster'] represents the maternal sex taboo which the young hero must overcome [. . .] such creatures suggest male sexual fears," p. 233.

dark women, such as Signora Laurentini in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* or the abbess in *The Monk*, who are deliberately wicked. The *femme fatale* is usually a more complex and fuller character than the Fair Maiden, since it shows the woman's capacity for good and evil.

Hawthorne takes over the old images of the Dark and Fair Lady to explore the gender relations of his day and the personality of the woman. His fictional women are frequently portrayed in contrast to his Faustian-scientific men, who usually control them and deny their true nature. An important number of his female characters are victimized at the hands of men, suffering exercises of male power. Many of Hawthorne's women are redemptive figures for their men, who have frequently severed their ties to a nurturing community. As Nina Baym argues in "Thwarted Nature," in his male-female relationships, Hawthorne expresses men's sexual fears. On the other hand, in his fiction, Hawthorne presents the complexity of women's lives at a time when the society was undergoing profound social changes. He offers rich images of females with their dreams and frustrations. They are depicted as being closer to nature and less warped by civilization than men.[10] Hawthorne analyzes the role of domesticity in his women: the woman as the Angel in the House. His females are frequently more compelling than his male characters, even though their moral roles have been often disregarded: "[his] women are usually more sympathetic and impressive than his men."[11] Hawthorne uses profusely the two stereotypes of the Gothic fiction, the Dark and the Fair Woman, to delve into the ambiguous position of the woman in his time. However, he creates a wider range of fictional women:

[10] In Gothic fiction men characters usually stand for cultural values, while women represent natural elements.

[11] ABEL, Darrel, p. 301.

his witches and old maids have often minor, but very important symbolic roles in the stories, such as Mistress Hibbins, portrayed as the devil's servant, or Hepzibah, the proud old lady who lives in the House of the Seven Gables.

In Hawthorne's "Rappaccini's Daughter," Rappaccini is a Faustian villain who strives to control nature, to acquire power over life and death. He exercises his patriarchal domination over the female of the story, his daughter Beatrice. However, she is powerful in human terms: she shows trust and love for her father. Beatrice has some of the qualities of the subversive Dark Lady: she has exotic appeal and fatal charm, but she also has integrity in her heart. Beatrice's nature has been poisoned by her father in an attempt to arm her against men. Metaphorically, she represents the threat of the sensual demonic woman for the young man, a typical theme of the Gothic tradition. However, the venom has not completely affected her soul: Beatrice tells Giovanni "though my body be nourished with poison, my spirit is God's creature, and craves love as its daily food."[12] Beatrice is not the *femme fatale* that Giovanni and Professor Baglioni seem to see in her: she is the most startled at her deadly condition. Beatrice has the mystery and strength that Faustian men try to analyze or destroy.

In *The Scarlet Letter* Hester, the demonic woman, is a symbol of transgression. She is the adulteress, the embodiment of men's fear of women's sexuality. In the opening event, when Hester is taken to the scaffold and forced to wear the scarlet letter, she refuses to name the father of her child and therefore to accept her adultery as a crime. Her act of resistance thwarts "the ceremonies by which [both legal and patriarchal] power is manifested,"[13] and she situates herself outside her community. The

[12] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1989, p. 207.

[13] FOUCAULT, Michell, p. 47

patriarchal society tries to confine, or even destroy, the *femme fatale*: Hester, the "fallen woman," is segregated from her Puritan community.[14] Thus society wrongs Hester, since it denies her human intercourse, but also frees her from social constrictions. Isolation increases Hester's freedom of thought and her rejection of public law and morality: her stigma allows her to question the feminine role and ignore the rules that control women in her society. Hester becomes a true emblem of subversion.

Hester's boldness is seen in her transgression of boundaries of faith and tradition.[15] Her untamed nature has its reflection in her daughter, Pearl, the "elf" child.[16] Like previous dark ladies, Hester is linked to primitivism, the wild, which separates her even more from her community: she is impulsive, passionate, reckless. As a symbol of rebellion, "Hester and her behavior are associated with the ideals of passion, self-expression, freedom, and individualism against ideals of order, authority, and restraint."[17] Through her needlework, the expression of her zeal and subversive temperament,[18] Hester converts her badge of shame into a mark of triumph and defiance. As a Dark Lady, Hester has the strong

---

[14] For more information about stigmatizing, its cause and implications, see: Marjorie Pryse, *The Mark and the Knowledge: Social Stigma in Classic American Fiction*, Columbus, Ohio State University Press, 1979.

[15] STEIN, William Bysshe, p. 112.

[16] Pearl is frequently associated with nature: a bird, an April breeze and a brook, a nymph-child or infant-dyad, a fairy and even an elf. According to Daniel Hoffman, "Pearl is indeed an elf, a pre-Christian Nature-spirit in human form," in "Hester's Double Providence," in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, *The Scarlet Letter,* p. 346.

[17] BAYM, Nina, 1988, p. 403.

[18] Roy R. Male also considers it an "act of penance," 1988, [Transformations: Hester and Arthur], in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, *The Scarlet Letter,* Critical Edition, GROSS, Seymour; BRADLEY, Sculley, etc. (eds.), New York & London: Norton, 1988, p. 326.

feelings of the woman, but she is also rational, a thinker:[19] "[she] is a combination of head and heart, with a preponderance of head."[20] Sensuality, an essential characteristic of Hawthorne's dark womanhood, is one of her most important attributes:[21] "She is a charmingly real woman whose abundant sexuality [. . .] was the characteristic and valuable endowment of her sex."[22] Hester has a great power in her "otherness," her exotism is transmitted in her description: "She had in her nature a rich, voluptuous, Oriental characteristic,—a taste for the gorgeously beautiful."[23] According to Kristin Herzog, "In *The Scarlet Letter* Hawthorne uses allegory, witchcraft, superstitions, Indian Black Art, or the popular assumption that dark Oriental or European heroines are fallen or dangerous women" (15). That is why it is very frequent in American fiction to make the questionable heroine a European instead of an American, since it seemed less shocking.[24]

Hester's rebellious nature links her to the native Americans: "Her intellect and heart had their home, as it were, in desert places, where she roamed as freely as the wild Indian in his

[19] Some other critics disagree with this point of view, Darrel Abel, in "Hawthorne's Hester," says that "unfitted by her intense femininity for intellectual speculations, as well as by her isolation from the common experience of mankind, which rectifies aberrant thought, she unwomaned herself and deluded herself with mistaken notions," p. 306.

[20] FOGLE, Richard Harter, 1988, p. 308.

[21] Ernest Sandeen says: "[. . .] her statuesque yet elegant figure, her abundance of dark, glossy hair, her regular features and rich complexion, her 'marked brow and deep black eyes,' is an impression of great erotic power," in "*The Scarlet Letter* as a Love Story," in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, *The Scarlet Letter,* p. 352.

[22] ABEL, Darrel, p. 306.

[23] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1988, p. 59.

[24] For more information, see: Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth*, New York, Vintage Books–Random House, 1950, p. 127.

woods."[25] Her "lawless passion [. . .] turned her into a kind of white Indian, and she becomes in Hawthorne's mind a focus for all those associations of knowledge with sexual power which we have [. . .] observed in Cooper's mythic red men and dark ladies."[26] The power of the Dark Woman is metaphorically transmitted through Hester's comparison to the mythical image of the Native American.[27] Her almost Indian qualities (her strength, passion, endurance, dignity and independence) are contrasted to the narrow-mindedness of the Puritan system and Dimmesdale's feminine weakness. Hester is a strong woman while Dimmesdale, the Puritan minister, appears as helpless.[28]

Hester, as a Dark Lady, is an example of human frailty, which makes her closer to the complex condition of the real woman and, consequently, more compelling as a fictional character. She is the evidence that erring is human. From a Puritan

---

[25] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1988, p. 136.

[26] PORTE, Joel, p. 104.

[27] In the early Puritan tradition, Indians were seen as enemies. However, when their threat was removed in the more established American civilization, Indian culture turned into a myth, as we can see in Thoreau's work and in Longfellow's "Hiawatha." (See: Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860*. Middletown, Conn., Wesleyan University Press, 1973, pp. 205, 356,358,363-365, 519-523). In the nineteenth century native Americans were alternately the symbol of humanity's childhood and its Golden age of innocence as well as lustful and cruel creatures. In his tales Hawthorne especially reflects the early Puritan view of the Indian, but he also expresses the vitality of the life force in the native American. See Louise K. Barnett, *The Ignoble Savage: American Literary Racism*, 1790-1890, Westport, Conn., Greenwood Press, 1975, p. 150.

[28] Dimmesdale admits his feebleness in the forest scene and asks Hester for her strength: "Think for me, Hester! Thou art strong. Resolve for me!" (Nathaniel Hawthorne, 1988, p. 134).

point of view, Hester is a sinful woman,[29] who receives a tragic punishment[30] until she decides to repent and come back to the community. Even though she sins only through passion and is more a victim of circumstances than a willful wrongdoer, she must be held accountable for her errors, which have brought about tragedy. However, from a romantic point of view, Hester is not a sinner, but a symbol of transgression and liberty: a romantic individualist who renounces traditional morality and lives freely. She has a law of her own that follows the dictates of nature and the human heart. According to them, nothing can come before the love between a man and a woman and Hester's adultery is not, then, a violation of God's law.[31]

At the beginning of the story and despite her 'sinfulness,' Hester is portrayed as "an image of Divine Maternity" when she is seen with her baby on the scaffold.[32] Thus she becomes the

---

[29] For more information about Hester as a sinner, see: Nina Baym, *Shape of Hawthorne's Career*, Ithaca, N. Y., Cornell University Press, 1976, esp. pp. 9, 125–126.

[30] According to Frederick I. Carpenter, "*The Scarlet Letter* [. . .] becomes the tragedy of perfection, in which the ideal woman is doomed to defeat by an inflexible moral tradition," in "Puritans Prefer Blondes: The Heroines of Melville and Hawthorne," *NEQ*, IX (June, 1936), p. 295.

[31] On the other hand, the transcendental idealists, who mediate between the romantic and orthodox Puritan points of view, think that Hester did give all her love and her adultery was not sinful, since she was not disloyal to her evil husband, whom she had never loved, or to the morality of her society, in which she had never believed. Seymour Gross argues that "neither of these positions has been able to take into account Hester's deep sense of having committed a sin and her feeling of guilt," in "'Solitude, and Love, and Anguish': The Tragic Design of *The Scarlet Letter*," in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, *The Scarlet Letter,* p. 336. He thinks that Hester's sense of sin is rooted in the conflict of moralities with her love: "she *has* sinned against Dimmesdale," p. 338.

[32] Charles Feidelson Jr. says that "If there were some 'Papist among the crowd of Puritans,' [when Hester is taken out of prison and onto the scaffold] this woman

redeeming Magna Mater, whose love can be healing for her lover, Dimmesdale.[33] Hawthorne's ambiguous approach to Hester, as a mother and an adulteress, is related to the nineteenth-century veneration of motherhood and the New England fears of woman sexuality, especially illicit sexuality. Monika Elbert claims that Hester's mothering is a continuation of her subversion of "patriarchal Puritan codes" (193), particularly when she decides to accept her role of a single mother against the expectations of the patriarchal society and fights for the custody of her child. Conversely, being a mother also seems to tame Hester's subversive self. Her daughter prevents her from becoming a radical rebel:[34] "[. . .] mothering, like knitting, fortunately 'soothes' Hester's tendency toward conflict."[35] Even though Hester is extraordinarily perceptive about social repression, she is not completely liberated: "She avoids any struggle for public power

---

taken in adultery might recall to his mind the contrasting 'image of Divine Maternity,'" p. 372. John Caldwell Stubbs also claims that Hester looks like "the madonna of Renaissance art," in "The Scarlet Letter: 'A Tale of Human Frailty and Sorrow,'" in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, *The Scarlet Letter,* p. 385.

[33] For information about this aspect, see: Robert E. Todd, "The Magna Mater Archetype in *The Scarlet Letter*," *New England Quarterly*, (45 8 Sept. 1972).

[34] Pearl maintains Hester's sense of Puritan moral direction and serves as a prick to her mother's conscience: "Her mission is to keep Hester's adultery always before her eyes, to prevent her from attempting to escape its moral consequences" (Richard Harter Fogle, 1988, p. 313). John C. Gerber also believes that Pearl restrains Hester's demonic character: "Hester's inclination is not so dominantly heavenward, and she is kept from an alliance with the Devil largely because Pearl keeps hold of her," in "Form and Content in The Scarlet Letter," in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, *The Scarlet Letter,* p. 288. However, like Hester, Pearl has an ambiguous character. David Leverenz states that Pearl is a classic female double of Hester and stands for her mother's hidden nature: "She embodies the lawless passion and impetuous rages constrained in her mother," p. 420. In her elfish nature, Pearl is a symbol of repression, but also a symbol of liberation for Hester.

[35] LEVERENZ, David, p. 418.

except to preserve her conventional role as a mother."[36] The "Cult of True Womanhood" of Hawthorne's day regarded motherhood as women's self-fulfillment, while "motherhood manifested itself in self-denial."[37] When Hester, on crucial occasions, must choose between her transgressive and maternal selves, maternal self-denial predominates.

In the forest scene, Hester expresses her subversion when she tells the minister to escape together from the Puritans and their laws. She takes off her cap, freeing her magnificent hair in a gesture that unites her rebellion with a manifest eroticism. However, Hester's defiance of the society is only momentary. Pearl forces her mother to resume the Scarlet Letter and replace the cap, thus "declaring the primacy of Hester's familiar appearance and identity as 'mother' over Hester's subversive/erotic life."[38] In the final scaffold scene Hester's maternity also triumphs over her rebellious self: Hester becomes "the Mater Dolorosa"[39] as she "supports his [Dimmesdale's] head against her bosom"[40] while Dimmesdale finally dies after making his confession before the multitude. In the end, Hester abandons her subversive inclinations and returns to New England where she retakes the Scarlet Letter of her own accord and comes to be a counselor to troubled women: she assumes the form of a "communal mother."[41] Thus she becomes an angel in her mercy;[42]

[36] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1988, p. 419.

[37] COTT, Nancy, p. 91.

[38] MILLINGTON, Richard H., p. 12184.

[39] ELBERT, Monica, p. 192.

[40] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1988, p. 172.

[41] ELBERT, Monica, p. 182.

a Mary figure to whom people bring their sorrows: "Redemption comes from the very forest powers which the Puritans considered fiendish."[43] She reverses the meaning of her mark of shame, the letter she must wear. From a Puritan point of view, Hester rises from low on the line of moral value, from a "scarlet woman" guilty of sin to "a sister of mercy."[44]

At the end of the story, Hester seems to abandon her transgressive tendencies. Her transformation can be explained as the result of her fortunate fall. Her primitive strength is tempered by suffering and faith. Even though she does not repent publicly, she redeems her sins by her exemplary actions in the society. Hester grows and discovers God's grace in her disinterested good works:[45] "Hester has gained in stature and dignity by enduring and transcending suffering,[46] and [. . .] she has grown in awareness of social responsibility."[47] As a member of a Puritan community and because of her love for a Puritan minister, she fights the demonic in her self and tries to keep love and mercy alive. Thus Hester

---

[42] Thus the letter "A" incorporates another meaning, "Angel" to its previous one, "Adulteress."

[43] HERZOG, Kristin, p. 12.

[44] Ernest Sandeen also claims that "As a lover [Hester] she has been ostracized but as a 'self-ordained Sister of Mercy' she is warmly accepted, although her works of charity spring from the same fertile depths of her being as the passion which has made her an outcast," p. 353.

[45] See: Michael T. Gilmore, *The Middle Way: Puritanism and Ideology in American Romantic Fiction*, Rutgers University Press, 1977, pp. 93-112 and Claudia D. Johnson's *Productive Tension of Hawthorne's Art,* Tuscaloosa, University of Alabama Press, 1981, p. 130.

[46] However, Roy R. Male believes that "Hester's ascension is limited," since "She sees the truth, but she will not utter the name," in [Transformations: Hester and Arthur], in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, p. 326.

[47] WAGGONER, Hyatt H., p. 320.

becomes a new American Eve who turns the prejudices of society into her own victory. She manages to accept her community while transforming it with her actions:[48] "The proscribed individual [Hester] regenerates their society; they unwittingly are moved, for good and evil, by the nature they vilify."[49]

However, from a twenty-first-century feminist point of view, it is hard to accept that Hester does not renounce, at least in part, her true subversive self. It seems to me that Hawthorne had a difficult time trying to conciliate Hester's indomitable and demonic spirit with the nineteenth-century ideal of womanhood. When Hester becomes a counsellor and integrates in the society that made her life miserable, she is rejecting her rebellious temperament, and accepting that, in her struggle against the patriarchal order, she is somehow defeated.[50] In Hawthorne's last words, Melissa M. Pennell sees that "both Hester and the narrator, and might we even say Hawthorne himself, await, not the prophetess of a new age, but the arrival of the angel in the house" (12184):

> The angel and apostle of the coming revelation must be a woman, indeed, but lofty, pure, and beautiful; and wise, moreover, not through dusky grief, but the ethereal medium of joy; and showing how sacred love should make us happy, by the truest test of a life successful to such an end![51]

---

[48] In *The Faces of Eve: Women in the Nineteenth-Century American Novel*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1976, Judith Fryer maintains that Hester is "wonderfully individualistic" and that "her own brand of lawlessness [. . .] threatens with destruction" the society of her day, p. 84.

[49] FEIDELSON, Charles Jr., p. 375.

[50] Charles Jr. Feidelson thinks that Hester "must be content with conflating all the traditional female roles; nurse, seamstress, mother, helpmeet, confidante, and tender heart," p. 423.

[51] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1988, pp. 177-178.

However, I also believe that, despite Hester's vanquishment, she still stands as a precursor of the New Woman. Her demonic qualities pervade our imagination:

> In contrast to many pliable, submissive women figures in the fiction of the 1850s, Hester has "combative energy" [. . .] a "desperate recklessness of [. . .] mood" [. . .], "freedom of speculation" [. . .], and "a mind of native courage and activity" [. . .]. She explores realms unimagined by Dimmesdale and by her society.[52]

Phoebe is the innocent Fair Lady of *The House of the Seven Gables*, "the pale moon girl [. . .] whom we see in the mythological tales as Ariadne."[53] She is quite different from Hawthorne's dark ladies. She "is not a Hester, a Zenobia, or a Miriam, women whose intellectual development and profound penetration into evil reflect their earlier experiences with the powers of darkness. Phoebe is Phoebe. She is the 'other' woman—like the pursemaker Priscilla or the dovekeeper Hilda—a figure of virginal innocence."[54] She is delicate, ethereal, and pure, a woman who has escaped the Black Man's mark.[55] In the gothic struggle between good and evil, Phoebe embodies righteousness and virtue.[56] According to

[52] HERZOG, Kristin, p. 13.

[53] MCPHERSON, Hugo, p. 238.

[54] FLIBBERT, Joseph, p. 123.

[55] MCPHERSON, Hugo, p. 238.

[56] She is incapable of an evil act. Alfred J. Levy thinks that "There is not an ounce of hypocrisy or pride in her; all that she does rises out of an intuitive love for her fellow man, and what she does is never repudiated by Hawthorne either explicitly or implicitly. Her good works do accomplish her announced goal; they do not lead to chaos or confusion, because she is incapable by nature of an evil act. For Hawthorne to have created Phoebe was daring, but the fact that he did create her has been slighted too often. There is no germ of depravity in her, and her good works lead only to a graceful repudiation of the familial curse," p. 467.

Frederick Crews, "her effect on the ancestral property is to cancel or reverse many of its dark implications" (186). Robert E. Whelan points out that Phoebe is the living symbol of love in *Seven Gables* and, thus, she is associated with images such as sunshine and fire (68).[57]

Phoebe, as a pure and virtuous White Heroine, feels an intuitive love for mankind: "Phoebe, far from reproducing the grasping materialism of her family, is a sunny, domestic angel."[58] Hawthorne tells us that she is a religion in herself and her spirit is capable of Heaven: a little angel who brings happiness into the people who surround her. In her ethic of love, Phoebe is a sort of reformer: "Phoebe, the embodiment of natural spontaneity and good will, mediates the ancestral pretensions of the aristocratic Pyncheons and the arrogant pride of the humble Maules, neutralizing generations of hostility. In the process the icy evil of clannishness melts into the common stream of love that invigorates the life of the community."[59] She unconsciously accomplishes the metamorphosis of those near her, bringing the best out of everything:[60] "Her method is always to draw the potential from the

[57] Richard H. Fogle claims that she represents "the truth of the heart" and "the best of human ties and human feelings," in *Hawthorne's Fiction: The Light and the Dark*, Oklahoma UP, Norman, 1952, p. 155. John Gatta also argues that Phoebe is "Hawthorne's practical embodiment of love and redemptive vigor," p. 40.

[58] MCPHERSON, Hugo, p. 28. Phoebe is frequently compared to an angel throughout the narrative, in contrast to the wicked Jaffrey Pyncheon. Hugo McPherson says: "The sunniness of Phoebe is the Pyncheon sunniness in gentle, feminine form. Her concerns are domestic, even angelic. She is pure, thrifty, and as warm-hearted as the blaze of a domestic fire," p. 140.

[59] STEIN, William Bysshe, p. 153.

[60] Stephen Knadler states that "Phoebe is repeatedly characterized in the novel by her therapeutic effect on Clifford and the other residents of Seven Gables," in "Genealogy of Madness: The House of the Seven Gables and Disciplinary

individual, never to impose her will on another—the cardinal sin for Hawthorne."[61] Her restorative capabilities revive chicken, houses and people with equal success. As a result of Phoebe's love for her relatives, Hepzibah and Clifford, the young maiden has a maternal role in the story. According to Crews, "despite her youth Phoebe stands in the place of an ideal parent, a selfless breadwinner and moral guide who can replace the tyrannical parent of guilty fantasy" (187).[62] She becomes the old couple's provider.[63]

On a real but also on a symbolic level, Phoebe is associated with youth and growing life,[64] with hope: her role is to nurture and foster life.[65] Alfred J. Levy argues that Phoebe "brings to the dying mansion pleasant qualities—light laughter and bubbling life [. . .] Phoebe stands for all that is young and growing, all that is hopeful and has no reason to be disillusioned" (467). Consistently, Phoebe is also strongly linked to nature, in which she moves in a liberating way. Her "natural magic" can confront the evil influence of the

---

Individualism," *American Quarterly* (Belmont University) 47 (June 1995), p. 295. Rita Golllin claims that Phoebe is "a force of physical and emotional health," p. 160.

[61] LEVY, Alfred J., p. 469.

[62] Martin Karlow states that Phoebe "enacts the role, which the doctor enacts in cases of schizophrenia, of surrogate mother, providing the ground for the establishment of the ontological security that the original mother failed to provide," in "Hawthorne's 'Modern Psychology': Madness and Method in *The House of the Seven Gables," Bucknell Review* 27, 1983, p. 119

[63] Nina Baym recognizes Phoebe's role as provider, but she also argues that she is not a liberating agent: "She is a great comfort to Hepzibah and Clifford, but in the manner of one making prison life more tolerable rather than as an agent of release," 1976, p. 166.

[64] In *The House of the Seven Gables*, in the chapter titled "May and November," Hawthorne establishes the contrast between May, represented by Phoebe, and November, which Hepzibah symbolizes.

[65] ABELE, Rudolph Von, 1967, p. 401.

Faustian man in the story, Judge Pyncheon. The little girl says that she has learnt the secret of how to talk with hens and chickens. Phoebe has the grace of a bird (phoebe is the name of a very common small song bird in New England) and her happiness is compared to the "twittering gaiety of the robins in the pear-tree." She is frequently associated with flowers, garden-roses, and her process of maturation with the blossoms on a "young fruit-tree." The white roses she picks from the garden and puts in her bedroom indicate her purity in contrast with the evil shadows that haunt the old house: "the white roses of her bedchamber [. . .] indicate her symbolic repudiation of the complex web of evil spun round the musty old house."[66] Phoebe is metaphorically related to the color white and to the light[67] as opposed to darkness, both symbols of good. Her presence banishes the shadows of the ancient dwelling and makes retribution possible: "Phoebe's sunlight [. . .] dispel[s] the darkness of the old Pyncheon

[66] LEVY, Alfred J., p. 467.

[67] This association is enhanced by the fact that Phoebe as a name comes from the Greek *Phoibe*, feminine of *Phoibos*. In Greek mythology this was the name of Artemis, the goddess of the moon, identified with the Roman Diana. That is why in old poetry Phoebe symbolized the moon. On the other hand, in Greek mythology, the masculine Phoibos was the god of the sun, which it symbolized in old poetry. Thus, in *Seven Gables,* Phoebe becomes the embodiment of light and sunshine. Hyatt H. Waggoner argues that Phoebe's "light is as real as the sunshine and as healing as love. Hers are the circles of nature, but nature completed and illumined by grace," in "The Ascending Spiral Curve," in HAWTHORNE Nathaniel, *The House of the Seven Gables*, p. 405; Alfred J. Levy says that Hawthorne "surrounds her with imagery of light and beauty that indicates her victory at his deepest level of consciousness," p. 469. Frederick Crews claims Phoebe's redemptive role and her function dispensing symbolic sunshine where hereditary gloom had prevailed before, p. 185; Richard H. Fogle comments that Phoebe's "primary image is sunshine, pleasantly tempered, a golden mean," in "Nathaniel Hawthorne: *The House of the Seven Gables*," *Landmarks of American Writings,* COHEN Hennig (ed.), New York, Basic Books, 1969, p. 115.

mansion."[68] Conversely, her absence from the house means days of storm and darkness for the gloomy abode of the Pyncheons: her return is the return of sunlight.[69] Phoebe symbolizes the triumph of light over darkness, the wrongs of the past.

As a gothic Fair Lady, Phoebe incarnates Hawthorne's ideal of womanhood. She is described as childlike, small and beautiful: graceful as a bird and pleasant as a gleam of sunshine. In contrast to the fallible nature of the Dark Lady, Phoebe, as a White Maiden, is an ideal of perfection that Hawthorne believes or wants to believe can be attained. That is probably why Hawthorne insists on her substantiality through terms such as: she is "a substance that could walk on earth." In the sentimental tradition as well as in the Gothic, the true woman is related to "feminine" qualities: she is associated with feelings. Phoebe is not a thinker, but a sensitive young woman.[70]

Phoebe is certainly the stereotype of the Light Heroine of the Gothic romance. Buitenhuis states that "The literary origins of Phoebe are also clear. Her prototype is the fair lady of romance tradition, domesticated and sentimentalized by nineteenth-century melodrama" (95). Despite being a Fair Lady, Phoebe is not a weak and submissive young woman. She seeks her destiny: she is a

---

[68] GATTA, John, p. 40.

[69] Rudolph von Abele calls her the "apostle of light, "a 'country cousin' who brings life and light to a 'decaying' and 'weather-beaten' house," 1967, p. 401. According to Wayne Troy Caldwell, "Phoebe is an almost purely emblematic character, as most of Hawthorne's females tend to be. Her main function in the story is to provide the light in contrast to her dark relatives," in "The Emblem Tradition and the Symbolic Mode: Clothing Imagery in *The Seven Gables*," *ESQ* (formerly known as the *Emerson Society Quarterly*) 19 (First Quarter 1973), p. 40.

[70] Donald Junkins associates her with Jung's intuition function, since her perceptions are transmitted in an unconscious or even irrational way; in other words, she has an intuitive awareness, in "Hawthorne's *The House of the Seven Gables:* A Prototype of the Human Mind," *Literature and Psychology* 17, 1967, pp. 200-201.

determined and independent woman like other gothic heroines such as Clara in Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland*. Phoebe's source can be unmistakably traced in Hawthorne's wife:[71] "Phoebe [. . .] recalls Sophia Hawthorne, the author's wife, in her diminutive size, her practicality, her cheerfulness and apparent redemptive power—and in her name; for Hawthorne gave Sophia the pet name of Phoebe during the early years of their marriage."[72] Sophia was a key element in Hawthorne's life: she rescued him from isolation and opened for him a window to the world. Likewise, Phoebe is really the spiritual salvation of the man she loves, Holgrave:

> Between Milton and Hawthorne lie nearly two hundred years of Sentimentalism, which sought to make of marriage another, better Eden, and of woman an innocent savior capable of restoring man to it. Hawthorne's fallen pairs, therefore, walk forth from their several false Gardens to a truer bliss; and his Gretchen-Eves sustain their trembling Adams, aware that, unlike their primal mother, they at least have not brought sin into the world.[73]

Like many gothic fair ladies, Phoebe is an orphan, who, without a guide or a model, sets out on the journey that will transform her. *Seven Gables* is a narrative of education in life for the young woman, who grows and matures through her confrontation with evil. At the beginning of the story, Phoebe is just becoming a woman: "she is seen at the brink of

[71] Sophia was, like Phoebe, optimistic, a great housekeeper, a flower arranger and small in body.

[72] GRAY, Richard, p. 90.

[73] FIEDLER, Leslie A., pp. 443-444.

womanhood."[74] In her stay in the old mansion, Phoebe learns from her experience of looking after the ageing Pyncheons, Clifford and Hepzibah, flourishing into a wiser young woman.[75] Her transformation is evident, "a change grew visible; a change partly to be regretted, although whatever charm it infringed upon was repaired by another, perhaps more precious. She was not so constantly gay, but had her moods of thought [. . .] She was less girlish than when we first beheld her, alighting from the omnibus; less girlish, but more a woman!"[76]

When the romance starts, Phoebe is still a young innocent girl, simple and happy, who has not blossomed. She has not discovered her passions. In her metamorphosis, she gains awareness through her experiences in the shadowy house and her sexual encounter with the young reformer, Holgrave. Phoebe is a living embodiment of Eve's struggle with the Devil. As a Fair Lady, she fights sexual temptations. According to Crews, Hawthorne seems to emphasize Phoebe's asexuality: "Hawthorne deliberately puts her [Phoebe] within a sexual perspective in order to declare her exempt from erotic inclinations. She dreams, but cheerfully; she has 'brisk impulses' [. . .] but they urge her to hike in the countryside; her 'ordinary little toils,' unlike Hester Prynne's, do not register unfulfilled desire but merely 'perfect health' [. . .]" (186). Crews associates Phoebe's lack of sexuality with her

[74] CREWS, Frederick, p. 186.

[75] Clark Griffith claims that "Halfway through the narrative the inner gloom touches Phoebe, disclosing to her truths deer and more meaningful than those revealed 'in broad day light or [. . .] in the ruddy light of a cheerful fire.' Thereafter, her temperament is never again so unfailingly sunny. Her eyes look darker: their shadowiness is token of her larger understanding," in "Shadow and Substance: Language and Meaning in *The House of the Seven Gables,*" in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, *The House of the Seven Gables,* p. 390.

[76] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1967, p. 175.

maternal role in the romance (187), which, consequently, takes on an Oedipal significance: the paradox of nineteenth-century veneration of motherhood and its attempt to deny women's sexuality.[77] The gothic female, as an Angel in the House, is in conflict with her erotic passions. However, as in many other gothic romances, the Fair Maiden's erotic impulses are not completely negated, but subtly implied:[78] "The thinly euphemistic nature of this scene[79] [between Phoebe and her lover] presumably enabled its first readers to ignore, or at least to perceive indistinctly, the implication that cheery little Phoebe is endowed with sexual desire. She unconsciously welcomes her seducer, and he 'involuntarily' tightens his hold on her."[80] It is not until the girl falls in love with Holgrave that, as Clifford says, "Girlhood has passed into womanhood; the bud is a bloom."[81]

Many gothic writers express through the Light Lady the woman's role in the domestic ideology, in which the different domains of male and female are clearly separated. The true nineteenth-century woman's position is spiritual and belongs to

[77] For more information see: L. S. Gross, p. 38; Mary P. Ryan, *Womanhood in America: From Colonial Times to the Present*, New York, Franklin Watts, 1975; Ann Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1977; Susan Phiney Conrad, *Perish the Thought: Intellectual Women in Romantic America*, 1830-1860, New York, Oxford University Press, 1976 and *Woman's Being, Woman's Place: Female Identity and Vocation in America*, KELLEY, Mary (ed.), Boston, G. K. Hall, Inc., 1979.

[78] Besides, Hawthorne resorts to the story of Alice Pyncheon, and Phoebe's resemblance to her ancestor, to hint at the maiden's repressed sexual desires.

[79] This episode is based on Radcliffe's gothic stories of a maiden whose virtue is in peril. Hawthorne seems to exploit the threat of sexual violence and rape to suggest the maiden's concealed passions.

[80] CREWS, Frederick, pp. 191-192.

[81] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1967, p. 220.

the household sphere: she plays the conservative part of the Angel in the House. On the other hand, the man has a more aggressive role in the masculine world of economy and power. Phoebe is very skilful in domestic chores and has, what Hawthorne calls, "homely witchcraft,"[82] a gift of practical arrangement: "a kind of natural magic, that enables these favored ones to bring out the hidden capabilities of things around them; and particularly to give a look of comfort and habitableness to any place which, for however brief a period, may happen to be their home."[83] Hawthorne comments that the girl's activity has a spiritual quality, like an angel, to whom she is compared:[84] "Angels do not toil, but let their good works grow out of them; and so did Phoebe."[85] Phoebe transforms the dingy Pyncheon mansion into a version of the "middle-class home." Richard H. Millington states that Hawthorne makes the young maiden the occasion,

> [. . .] for the exploration of the cultural possibilities and values, constitutive of middle-class culture, that she stands for: the home as refuge from the marketplace; woman as exponent within that refuge of a set of values that counter the cutthroat market; sympathy and moral influence as forms of power alternative to the domination and appropriation that infect the economic sphere. It is to this home-centered but not inevitably homebound system of values and strategies of social transformation that I

[82] According to Peter Buitenhuis, she is "an active busy housewife who has the knack, like the good fairy, of transforming her surroundings by her presence and disposition," p. 96.

[83] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1967, pp. 71-72.

[84] Frederick Crews claims that Phoebe's "homely witchcraft" is "a marriage of spiritual power and tidy domesticity," p. 187.

[85] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1967, p. 82.

> refer when I speak of 'domestic' and 'sentimental' ideology during the course of this chapter. (1992: 116)[86]

Consistently with the domestic ideology, Phoebe's role as a woman is conservative, her essence is to keep within the limits of law. In contrast to the Dark Lady's transgressive character, Phoebe's disposition is to obey rules. When the young reformer tells her about his love, she answers him: "And then—I am afraid! You will lead me out of my own quiet path. You will make me strive to follow you, where it is pathless. I cannot do so. It is not my nature. I shall sink down, and perish!"[87] Through her job as a housewife, Phoebe becomes the domestic center of the middle-class culture and the voice of the communal. Millington highlights the importance of the female power and domestic ideology:

> Most striking is the metaphysical force given the domestic here. Phoebe is at once the creator of the home and the guarantor of the real; her touch ensures not simply one's comfort but one's place within the human community, one's escape from the meaningless, the 'delusion,' of a merely private selfhood. This celebration of womanly 'influence' has become an ontological claim; being is conferred by the communal connection presided over by women and beginning in the home. (1992: 118)

[86] For more information about domestic ideology see: Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1977; Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood;" Ann Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture*, New York, Knopf, 1977; Kathryn Kish Sklar, *Catharine Beecher: A Study in American Domesticity*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1973; and Mary P. Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981.

[87] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1967, p. 306.

Consequently, Phoebe, as an ideal of femininity, does not belong exclusively to the house. She displays her abilities in private and in her commercial transactions with the public. Hawthorne considers her genial activity as one of the most valuable traits of the true New England woman. She is not only a gifted shopkeeper; she had also had a table at a fancy-fair and made better sales than anybody. Phoebe, however, represents more the domestic sphere than the marketplace. Her trade does still have the human quality that is lost in many economical transactions of big cities, probably because "she represents a moment of cultural transition, the shift in population that accompanied the growth of an urban-centered market economy in antebellum America, and her behavior, especially her relation to the marketplace, suggests that she has preserved some of the values associated with the 'face-to-face' transactions of a small-town economy."[88] Thus Phoebe is the Angel in the House, but she is also part of the community. She is the only character living in the house who chooses to relate to people and restores a certain equilibrium to the existence of the withdrawn inhabitants of Seven Gables, bringing them out of their detachment from society: "She enters the tomb of the seven gables where all seems divorced from normal relationships, and she restores an equilibrium to all three of the isolated inhabitants."[89]

---

[88] For more information about rural economic life, see: Jack Larkin, "The Merriams of Brookfield: Printing in the Economy and Culture of Rural Massachusetts in the early Nineteenth Century," in *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 96 (April 1986), pp. 39-73. Larkin writes that "economic life was concrete, face-to face, and inextricably entwined with family ties, everyday social interactions, and community relationships." Larkin believes that this rural economy was changing in complex ways in response to the emergence of a larger-scale, urban-centered market economy.

[89] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1967, p. 468.

Even though, Phoebe, as a Fair Maiden, has a conservative and conventional office, her overall mission in the gothic tale may be seen as transgressive: her final triumph over evil, through her angelic qualities and her role as a mother, points to the defeat of the Law of the Father and expresses the fissures of the western patriarchal family that is the Gothic myth itself. Hawthorne emphasizes the crucial task of his white heroine, Phoebe, in the struggle against the ills of the past and her beneficial influence in the community. It is finally in marriage and domesticity that Holgrave and Phoebe can find the hope for retribution. Only man and woman together can break back into Eden and momentarily restore Paradise on earth. For Hawthorne, there are "no redeemed individuals, only redeemed couples, husband and wife, like the pair who, in 'The Maypole of Merry Mount,' accept expulsion from the Garden of irresponsible indulgence [. . .] Similarly, Holgrave and Phoebe in *The House of the Seven Gables*, [. . .] by choosing marriage over passion and loneliness submit 'to earth's doom of care and sorrow, and troubled joy [. . .]."[90]

In *The Blithedale Romance* we find two clear examples of the traditional Dark Lady, Zenobia, and the Fair Maiden, Priscilla. On one hand, Zenobia is more than anything a woman, or as Coverdale considers her "a magnificent woman:" "we seldom meet with women now-a-days, and in this country, who impress us as being women at all; their sex fades away and goes for nothing, ordinary intercourse. Not so with Zenobia."[91] According to Baym, Zenobia is "a depiction of the eternal feminine as earthy, maternal, domestic, natural, sensual, brilliant, loving, and demanding, as is described mainly in images of softness, radiance, warmth, and health, none of which are even slightly ambivalent or ambiguous in their emotional import" (1978: 354).

[90] FIEDLER, Leslie, p. 443.

[91] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, p.17.

In her transgressive role, Zenobia becomes a sort of representative of the New Woman: "A woman called Zenobia, of full rich beauty, independent spirit, and high intellectual power, is also a principal; and represents the advocate of the 'rights of women,' chafing at the control which convention and the real or assumed superiority of man enforce upon the sex."[92] She stands for "the high-spirited woman bruising herself against the narrow limitations of her sex."[93] Zenobia has been seen as an example of "the danger of a woman, no matter what her gifts, deviating ever so little from the received usages of society."[94] As a subversive

[92] See the extract [The Dangers of Social Innovation] of the *Spectator* (July 1852), in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, p. 275.

[93] See the extract [Imagination as Truer Than History] of the Westminster Review unsigned and published in *Brownson's Quarterly Review*, n. s., 6 (October 1852), in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, p. 271.

[94] See ibid, p. 276. On that same page quote number 2 comments that *The Southern Quarterly Review* (October 1852) suggested that Hawthorne should have had Zenobia married instead of committing suicide, since that was the best remedy of the time for the woman's independent spirit to mend the errors of her ways. Samuel G. Howe claims that Zenobia represents a "threat to traditional modes of life" in her "political boldness." He argues that, as a consequence of the fact that she challenges established social norms, her life is twisted and depleted. Howe associates her unconventionality with a certain masculine energy and arrogance that brings her public satisfactions, but denies her Hollingsworth's love. He says that her freer sexuality threatens the feminine role, p. 294. Nina Baym states that "Zenobia, from society's point of view, is morally suspect, as is the energetic and passionate principle she represents," 1978, p. 353; she comments that Zenobia is in rebellion against the society's version of the feminine and that she "loses her fortune [. . .] because she refuses to surrender on society's terms," 1978, p. 360. James H. Justus, however, thinks that Zenobia is an "unconvincing feminist" because Hawthorne makes an inept characterization, in "Character and Art in *The Blithedale Romance*," in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, p. 395. He adds that "Zenobia's statements on women's rights pale into vagueness when set beside Coverdale's own conciliation, extravagant vision of a matriarchy in which the submissive male 'would kneel before a woman-ruler!'," p. 401.

woman, she is somehow connected not only with fallibility, but also with some sort of immorality:[95] "Coverdale considers her as amoral as nature itself."[96] It is a fact that Zenobia has "outstridden the even pace of society;" however, there seems to be discrepancies as whether her efforts are misleading or not:

> She [Zenobia] has a certain amount of courage and passion, but no philosophy. Her impulses start off in the wrong direction, nor does she seem to possess the earnestness necessary to induce a woman to defy public opinion. She is a mere fierce, wild wind, blowing hither and thither, with no fixity of purpose, and making us shrink closer every moment from the contact.[97]

Zenobia, the demonic woman, symbolizes nature[98] "as exotic beauty and irresistible life-force pressed by civilization into artificial or deadening channels."[99] Her vitality and passion are depicted through fire imagery: the "warm and radiant luxury of a

---

[95] In a review in the *Graham's Magazine* (September 1852), the queenly Zenobia is also accused of having "something provokingly equivocal in her character." From the extract [The Narrator as Interpreter] of the *Graham's Magazine* (September 1852), in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, p. 278; see also the extract [Unnatural Characters] of the *Blackwood's Magazine* (May 1855), in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, p. 285, where it says that "it is precisely your Zenobias and Holllingsworths, your middle-aged people who have broken loose from family and kindred, and have no *events* in their life, who do all the mischief, and make all the sentimentalism and false philosophies in the world."

[96] HERZOG, Kristin, p. 29.

[97] See the extract [Excessive Imperfection in Characters] of the *American Whig Review* (November 1852), in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, pp. 283-284.

[98] Nina Baym claims that, in her symbolic function, Zenobia is the creative energy both of nature and the self, 1978, p. 353.

[99] HERZOG, Kristin, p. 30.

somewhat too abundant fire"[100] illuminates her nature.[101] She is even compared to a glowing Pandora, "fresh from Vulcan's workshop, and full of celestial warmth by dint of which he had tempered and moulded her."[102] Zenobia is a passionate woman, whose acts are the result of her love for a man and whose unrequited love leads her to commit suicide. Her initial magnificence and queenliness are transformed in the tragic end when she becomes a dethroned queen. Her image of passion and creative energy changes into a piece of lifeless art, "the marble image of a death-agony,"[103] even though she does not lose her power, which will haunt Hollingsworth for the rest of his life. Zenobia of Blithedale is powerful, but finally vanquished.[104] She fights her past mistakes, her early marriage, and decides her own destiny: she chooses to die rather than accept humiliation. Zenobia is a woman of the future, whose "visions of the revised status of her sex in a new society, expressed in her boldness and personal

---

[100] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, p. 22.

[101] In *The Death of the Artist*, Rudolph Von Abele argues that Zenobia is linked to the domestic Phoebe Pyncheon through sun metaphors, 1955, p. 78.

[102] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, p. 23.

[103] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, p. 216.

[104] The queenly Zenobia resembles Zenobia of Palmyra. This proud Arab queen, widow of Odenathus, declared herself Queen of the East thus defying the Roman Empire: "With masculine energy she pushed forward to the frontiers of her kingdom so as to include Egypt and a large part of Asia Minor [. . .] Her victorious troops [. . .] occupied Alexandria" (H. K. Finn, "Design of Despair: The Tragic Heroine and the Imagery of Artifice in Novels by Hawthorne, James, and Wharton," Diss. St John's University, 1976, pp.45-46). She was finally defeated by Aurelian and, desperate, she fled into the desert where she was taken captive and led in gold chains before Aurelian's chariot in his victorious entrance into Rome. Nina Baym says of Zenobia, "As the life force, she has been put down; as woman, she has been denied a place in a world administered by men," 1978, pp. 366-367.

freedom, are savagely defeated."[105] Barbara and Allen Lefcowitz argue that Zenobia "approaches the status of a true tragic heroine [. . .] she emerges not as a bloodless caricature of either moral evil or unbridled passion, but like Hester and Miriam contains an ambiguous blend of Transcendentalist self-will and powerful eroticism which causes her always to be poised at the edge of the whirlpool" (347).

As the stereotype of the Dark Lady, Zenobia has been clearly associated with sex.[106] She is regarded as "the embodiment of sensuality" and "open in her sexuality."[107] Her beauty and offering of concealed pleasures are emphasized: "she is essentially a mythic being, the incarnation of hidden longings and desires, as beautiful, we are repeatedly told, as she is 'inexpressibly terrible,' a temptress offering the ascetic sons of the puritans the 'treasure-trove of a great sin'."[108] She is bewitching, "the dark embodiment of seduction."[109] The flower that characterizes her is not only a

[105] LEVY, Leo B., p. 318.

[106] Zenobia is the pseudonym of a lady who is a sort of Yankee George Sand (Pseudonym of Aurore Dupin, a French novelist, who was known to be a liberated woman, especially in matters of sex): "It is clear that her 'antecedents' have been questionable. She has been no stranger, from her girlhood upwards, to what the French call Love, and we are permitted to infer that she takes part in the scheme with the presentiment that something may turn up in the way of a good novelesque amour, and she is not altogether mistaken," see the extract [A Satire on Social Reform] of the *North British Review* (November 1853), in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, p. 277.

[107] HOWE, Samuel G., p. 293.

[108] RAHV, Philip, p. 338.

[109] LEFCOWITZ, Barbara and Allen, p. 347.

symbol of her relationship with nature,[110] but also "the exotic emblem of her sexual vitality."[111]

On the other hand, Priscilla, the Fair Lady of *The Blithedale Romance*, is also linked to nature. She brings spring to Blithedale: "She is the very picture of the New England spring."[112] Priscilla is first described as a "shadowy snow-maiden,"[113] the "ghost-child," the "slim and unsubstantial girl."[114] While Zenobia represents the life-force "capable of good, capable of evil but above all simply a reservoir of energy striving to realize itself, Priscilla is spirituality opposed to life: love without passion, art without energy, woman without body."[115] Priscilla's insubstantiality is depicted through images of melting and floating as in Zenobia's prophecy, she will "melt away at my feet in a pool of ice-cold water."[116] Leo B. Levy

---

[110] Barbara and Allen Lefcowitz say that "her flower is a *fleur du mal* with magical powers of seduction, a phony trinket, or a 'relic' of her guilty past, it is at the same time a token of her natural vitality and passion," p. 347. Baym claims that Zenobia's flower, as a symbol, has been forced in many directions 1978, p. 355. Newton Arvin states that it symbolizes Zenobia's desire to compete with men, pp. 197-199; Richard Harter Fogle takes a more common stand when he associates it with Zenobia's pride, as Coverdale says at one point of the novel, in *Hawthorne's Fiction: The Light and the Dark*. Oklahoma UP, Norman, (revised edition), 1964, p. 173; Von Abele relates it with lust, the flower is "a forced bloom bred by man for his lust's pleasure," 1955, p. 80. On the other hand, Baym believes that the flower symbolizes sensuality, but neither evil nor unnatural: "it proclaims that Zenobia's nature is passionate as well as pastoral." She thinks that Hawthorne is trying to reinstate sexuality as a legitimate and natural element of femininity, 1978, p. 355.

[111] LEVY, Leo B., p. 318.

[112] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, p. 54.

[113] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, p. 31.

[114] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, p. 25.

[115] BAYM, Nina, 1978, p. 361.

[116] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, p. 31.

argues that "Like all of Hawthorne's spirit-maidens, she is clinging, frail, beyond reproach. She may be 'the pure heart' and the 'moral touchstone' of the book, but she is unable to articulate these values, either verbally or through her presence" (320).[117] In her conservative role, Priscilla is mainly portrayed as a vulnerable young woman:

> [. . .] a *weakly* bud that blossoms into health and hope under the fostering clime of Blithedale, where she seems a butterfly at play in a flickering bit of sunshine, and mistaking it for a broad and eternal summer—though her gayety reveals at times how *delicate* an instrument she is, and what *fragile* harp-strings are her nerves—a being of *slender and shadowy* grace, whose mysterious qualities make her seem diaphanous with spiritual light.[118] (My emphasis)

Priscilla is a victim and needs help: she is oppressed by the tyrannical male.[119] Unlike Phoebe, she seems to lack a free will of her own and thus she becomes "a promising victim of the Black Man, of mesmerists, or such empirical zealots as Hollingsworth."[120] However, Priscilla is not merely preyed upon. She is depicted as

---

[117] Levy quotes some of the words from Richard Harter Fogle's *Hawthorne's Fiction: The Light and the Dark*. (Revised ed.), Norman, Okla., 1964, p. 188.

[118] See the extract [Vivid and Accurate Characters] of the *New Monthly Magazine* (June 1853), in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, p. 286.

[119] As Leo B. Levy observes, she "is no less a scapegoat figure than Billy Budd: both are sacrificial victims to an impossible ideal, and both are incorporated into a *status quo* in which brotherhood and justice remain out of reach of the societies that have used them," p. 323. Nina Baym says that she is almost a cripple, "She is simply a victim, her physical and mental debilitation directly caused by the conditions of her exploited life," 1978, p. 362.

[120] MCPHERSON, Hugo, p. 238.

having some "wildness,"[121] "animal spirits," and stubbornness in her. She is even compared to a choking vine:[122] "Priscilla's love grew, and tended upward, and twined itself perseveringly around this unseen sister; as a grape-vine might strive to clamber out of a gloomy hollow among the rocks, and embrace a young tree, standing in the sunny warmth above."[123] She becomes somehow the guardian of her companion, Hollingsworth, "with her protective and watchful quality."[124] Not only is Priscilla a victim, the masque and veil imagery indicate that Zenobia is also abused. Both Westervelt and Hollingsworth put them in bondage, using women like tools for their own purposes.

Priscilla is the Veiled Lady. The veil can have multiple interpretations: it enhances spiritual qualities, signaling the maiden's innocence and purity; it may also emphasize the sensuality of the woman's body and create desire in the viewer; it earns the audience's interest because of its theatricality; it fabricates a separate sphere that makes the woman appear

[121] Nina Baym says that she has "a quite striking and significant animal wildness that develops as she recovers at Blithedale," 1978, p. 362.

[122] This image is quite frequent in Hawthorne's fiction: in *The American Notebooks*, (STEWART, Randall (ed.), New Haven, Conn., 1932) in the journal entry of Sept. 26, 1841, Hawthorne describes the same phenomenon of a choking vine. In the notebook entry of Oct. 10, 1841, he records "I visited my grape vine [. . .] This vine climbs around a young maple tree," pp. 209-213. In June 1858, Hawthorne also depicts an old grapevine "imprisoning [. . .] the friend that supported its tender infancy. See also *The French and Italian Notebooks*, Centenary Edition, XIV, WOODSON, Thomas; ELLIS, Bill (eds.), Columbus, Ohio State University Press, 1980, p. 274. This image seems to have certain ambiguity in Hawthorne's mind: something natural and delicate can become unintentionally choking or oppressing.

[123] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, p. 171.

[124] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, p. 223.

unattainable.[125] Priscilla becomes "a paradigm of innocence and goodness, a personification of the 'blonde principle of purity'."[126] Besides, Priscilla, as the Veiled Lady, has been frequently seen as an embodied spirit imprisoned in her own impenetrable domain, who acts the conventional role of the Angel in the House.[127]

As the maiden behind the veil, Priscilla may represent "New England's idealized notion of womanhood."[128] Veiled women, as mediums, were frequently young women who were very sensitive to the unearthly realm and could get in an unconscious state in which they served as the voices of the spiritual world.[129] They

[125] Nina Baym says that "the veil functions largely to excite the viewers' interest in what it conceals. The Veiled Lady titillates even as she appeals to an ideal of feminine purity," 1978, p. 364. In addition, she believes that the veil together with Priscilla's insubstantial frame suggest an ideal of spirituality equated with lack of body and the emotions that the flesh arouses: the denial of sex.

[126] LEFCOWITZ, Barbara and Allen, p. 341. The phrase "blonde principle of purity" was formulated by Frederic I. Carpenter, "Puritans Prefer Blondes: The Heroines of Melville and Hawthorne," p. 262. Nina Baym characterizes Priscilla as "a symbol of matchless purity and innocence," 1978, p. 360. For more information about Priscilla as a spiritual paradigm, see: Harry Levin, *The Power of Blackness: Hawthorne, Poe, Melville,* New York, Knopf, 1958, pp. 88-89; Morton Cronin, "Hawthorne on Romantic Love and the Status of Women," *PMLA*, LXIX (March, 1954), pp. 89-98; and Hyatt Waggoner, 1963, p. 188.

[127] GODDU, Teresa, p. 98.

[128] O'CONNOR, William Van, p. 40; Teresa Goddu believes that the motionless woman behind the veil functioned as a dominant image of womanhood, p. 97.

[129] For more information about nineteenth-century mediums, see: Ann Braude's *Radical Spirits* in which she reports case studies of mediums. Some other studies on mesmerism, mediums and spiritualism are: Robert C. Fuller, *Mesmerism and the American Cure of Souls, The American Historical Review*, Vol. 88, No. 4 (Oct., 1983), pp. 1065-1066; Howard H. Kerr, "Mediums, and Spirit-Rappers, and Roaring Radicals: Spiritualism in American Literature 1850-1900," The *Journal of American History*, Vol. 59, No. 3 (Dec., 1972), pp. 725-726; Howard H. Kerr, John William Crowley and Charles L. Crow, *The Haunted dusk: American supernatural fiction, 1820-1920*, University of Georgia Press, 1983; Howard H. Kerr and Charles L

symbolized the "true" woman's typical attributes and pointed to how market transactions were an essential part of the genuine nature of womanhood. When the lady behind the veil was publicly displayed,[130] her private identity was revealed achieving paradoxical meanings: she stood for the dual position of the Victorian woman in America,[131] who embodied both the marketplace and its disappearance from it. According to Goddu,

> By insisting on their own passivity—relegating their selection as mediums to the spirits and claiming the role of passive instruments—and by making the typical feminine characteristics of sensitivity, suffering, and sympathy the hallmarks of their trade, mediums conformed to the ideal of true womanhood. The mesmerized medium publicly staged her compliance with the ideology of women's domestic powers. (98)

Mediums were both private women and public performers. When the mesmerized lady transgressed her proper sphere, she

---

Crow, *Occult in America*, University of Illinois Pres rprt. (August 1, 1986); R. Laurence Moore, *In Search of White Crows: Spiritualism, Parapsychology, and American Culture, The American Historical Review*, Vol. 83, No. 4 (Oct., 1978), pp. 1104-1105; Barton Levi St. Armand, "Veiled Ladies: Dickinson, Bettine, and Transcendental Mediumship," *Studies in the American Renaissance,* 1987, in MYERSON, Joel (ed.), Charlottesville, UP of Virginia, 1987, pp. 1-51; and Arthur Wrobel, *Pseudo-Science and Society in 19th Century America, The History Teacher*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (Feb., 1990), pp. 193-194.

[130] Veiled ladies were made to pose as classical statues on the theatrical stage. The cultural importance of this image can be seen in the frequent statues of veiled women, such as Chauncey Ives's *Undine*.

[131] Nina Baym states that "The Veiled Lady is the Victorian ideal of womanhood as a spiritual (noncorporeal) being, carried to an extreme and implicating in its extremity the basest kinds of human emotions," 1978, p. 364. However, this spirituality is false, since Priscilla is a "possessed" creature owned and exploited by Westervelt.

became vulnerable to the male monsters of the market. As Goddu points, "Armed with the spiritual values lacking in the marketplace, the middle-class woman, in the role of angel, was expected to domesticate the market's demons" (97). Despite her ethereal quality, Priscilla is deeply connected with economic questions as a result of her role as a seamstress and as a Veiled Lady: "Priscilla is a creature of society and Zenobia is in revolt against it, the money *belongs* with Priscilla."[132] In political and social terms we could say that Priscilla's conformism triumphs, while Zenobia's rebellion destroys her.[133]

Mediums not only stood for the ideal of femininity, but their commodification also meant their corruption. The commercial connections of the Veiled Lady can be interpreted in sexual terms, since they give up their bodies for money: They are taken over by spirits and male mesmerists and their audiences consume them. As a result, mediums were viewed as promiscuous and similar to prostitutes.[134] Barbara and Allan Lefcowitz believe that the purse motif that Hawthorne uses to characterize Priscilla has at least two symbolic possibilities: covert sexuality and concealed guilt. They believe that it suggests that "at least part of Priscilla's strangely cloistered past was spent in the practice of sexual activities of less than a pristine or conventionally wholesome nature. These sexual implications are not, however, fully developed in the course of the novel" (343).[135] They also imply that Priscilla was meant to

[132] BAYM, Nina, 1978, p. 360.

[133] ABELE, Rudolph Von, 1955, p. 80.

[134] BRAUDE, Ann, p. 124.

[135] For the argument that considers that Priscilla may have been a prostitute, see Barbara F. Lefcowitz and Allan B. Lefcowitz's "Some Rents in the Veil: New Light on Priscilla and Zenobia in *The Blithedale Romance*;" Lefcowitz base their assumptions about Priscilla's past sexual activities on different elements besides the symbolic connotation of the embroidered silk purses that are continually linked

represent "a fallen or exploited innocence which would eventually be redeemed through the utopian therapeutics of the Blithedale experiment" (345).

Mesmeric control is also linked to the Faustian contract in which the soul is bartered to make a profit, since the female victim, the medium, has a sort of alliance with the male magician. D. H. Lawrence believes that Priscilla is the medium of those who are dead to the soul (118, 119). The psychic enslavement of the Veiled Lady suggests women's domination by men as well as it connects to slavery. As Baym says, Priscilla is an example that "The condition of woman in the nineteenth century, in a word, is slavery" (1978: 362). Mesmerism reveals that everything and everyone can be subjected to commodification: "The veiled lady, displayed on the public stage and sold by the mesmerist to the gaze of others, [. . .] embodies the market self."[136]

Priscilla, in her medium role, also personifies the ideal of a woman who has a deep, submissive, unquestioning reverence for her lover: "Priscilla, who exhibits the clinging, devoted, feminine, character, seeing nothing but the person she loves."[137] She is the

---

to Priscilla: Priscilla's putative father, Mr. Moodie, is said to have used to sell a "good many" of them, together with some other allusions to his mercantilism; Priscilla's association with hidden mysteries and closed spaces; Coverdale's possible liaison with the maiden in a connotative scene where she hands him "an exquisitely wrought night cap;" the frequent allusions to the unhappy, even terrifying nature of her past experience; contemporary connections between the seamstress profession and that of the prostitute, etc. Nina Baym also argues that Priscilla stands for the feminine ideal in her role as the Veiled Lady, but she claims that "As a seamstress Priscilla, represents the whole range of exploited feminine roles in society, all of which, from wife to prostitute, were viewed by feminists as examples of economic subjection of woman to man," 1978, p. 361. See also Judith Fryer, *Faces of Eve*, pp. 90–91.

[136] GODDU, Teresa, p. 107.

[137] See the extract [The Dangers of Social Innovation] of the *Spectator* (July 1852), in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, p. 275. See also the extract [The Narrator as

representation of "the feminine principle in its most conservative aspect (that which makes the family go round)."[138] According to Darrel Abel,

> Hawthorne regarded a woman's essential life as consisting in the right exercise of her emotions. His attitude toward women is that of Victorian liberalism; he looked upon them as equal to men, but differently endowed. To him, the distinctive feminine virtues were those characteristic of ideal wifehood and motherhood: instinctive purity and passionate devotion (305).

Priscilla is presented as an alienated, exiled spirit, who undergoes, at Blithedale, a metamorphosis which describes the evolution of a city girl transported to the country. Coverdale himself observes that she "kept budding and blossoming, and daily putting on some new charm [. . .] it seemed as if we could see Nature shaping out a woman before our very eyes."[139] Levy believes that this development terminates in the drawing room of the Boston boarding house where Priscilla is brought. There,

> No longer the slum girl or the blossoming country maiden, she appears in the dazzling radiance of a pure white dress her innocence now embellished in a fashionable mode of the town. Her situation is a mockery of the rags-to-riches motif: what appears as a progression from urban shabbiness and rural naturalness to an entirely new splendor, corresponding

---

Interpreter] of the *Graham's Magazine* (September 1852), in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, p. 278; it says that Priscilla is "an embodiment of feminine affection in its simplest type."

[138] HOWE, Samuel G., p. 290.

[139] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, pp. 67-68.

> to the dreams of her childhood, conceals a return to servitude.[140]

Contrary to Zenobia, Priscilla achieves "some semblance of fulfillment," even if that is only "an insubstantial and largely unconvincing triumph of little more than an idealized wish-fulfillment fantasy."[141]

Despite their different roles as Dark and Fair Lady, both women, Zenobia and Priscilla, share some characteristics. According to Peter B. Murray both females are "partial people, two aspects of the feminine personality" (109). Barbara and Allen Lefcowitz also suggest that, since both ladies are somehow associated with Margaret Fuller,[142] it might mean that "this identification is an adumbration of Zenobia's and Priscilla's role as the dual components of a split character" (344). They add,

> [. . .] in actuality, they [Priscilla and Zenobia] seem to be related to one another as the major and minor key of the same melody, or the manifest and latent content

---

[140] LEVY, Leo B., p. 322.

[141] LEFCOWITZ, Barbara and Allen, p. 349.

[142] Many critics have insisted on the fact that Margaret Fuller is the source for Zenobia since both of them were feminists residing at a Utopian community and both were "living on 'Rights of Woman' excitement, and both dying by drowning!," see the extract [Vivid and Accurate Characters] of the *New Monthly Magazine* (June 1853), in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, p. 286. However, Nina Baym states that they, Fuller and Zenobia, did not share traits. She thinks that Fuller is really linked to Priscilla. Baym claims that Hawthorne did not like Margaret Fuller because she was intellectually pretentious and he saw a false spirituality in her. For Margaret Fuller the ideal of femininity was spiritual and non-corporeal and the ultimate relations between men and women should be sexless, as between family members. Baym believes that Hawthorne thought that Fuller's feminism was false, for it led to the worship of Priscilla, the idealization of a hideous exploitation as an example of spirituality, 1978, pp. 362.

> of the same dream. For example, though Zenobia's outstanding symbolic prop is the exotic tropical flower she wears in her hair, Priscilla also has her small panoply of flower associations—consisting of pallid blossoms, frail anemones, and—at one point—weed. Likewise Zenobia has her share of Priscilla-like masks, hidden mysteries, and sealing allusions. Indeed, it is the common attribute of "veiledness" and deception, rather awkwardly corroborated by the fact that they share the same enigmatic family past, which constitutes the "singular anomaly of likeness coexisting with perfect dissimilitude" that Coverdale notes in the sick-chamber scene. (347)

According to Kristin Herzog both Zenobia and Priscilla can be seen as Pandora figures, troublemakers.[143] Hawthorne associates the mythical woman with Zenobia through her passion and the fire imagery. However, Pandora is classically depicted as a "shy maiden" to whom the gods gave gifts, "silvery raiment and a broidered veil, a wonder to behold, and bright garlands of blooming flowers and a crown of gold [. . .] From her, the first woman, comes the race of women, who are an evil to men, with a nature to do evil."[144] Thus, Priscilla fits in with these other aspects of the mythic figure: her shyness, the veil, the flower garlands and the gifts. At *The Blithedale Romance* both women are also related to exotic mysteriousness and witchery. The queenly Zenobia is called an "enchantress," a "witch," a "sorceress." She is treated like a

[143] According to Herzog, "Pandora is the equivalent of the Hebrew-Christian Eve, a troublemaker. She is given to men as a punishment for the invention of fire. Zeus ordered Hephaistos to make Pandora and carry her to a place where men were sitting around their fire," p. 32.

[144] HAMILTON, Edith, p. 70.

primitive witch,[145] who even prophesizes her own fate soon after the story opens, "this shadowy snow-maiden [. . .] shall [. . .] give me my death with a pair of wet slippers."[146] Priscilla with her "gift of second sight and prophecy" is also somehow "bewitching." She is likened to a "riddle," a "Medusa," a "Sybil" and a "sprite."[147] However, Herzog sees a difference between the mysteriousness of these two females: Zenobia seems to represent the mystery of nature, while Priscilla seems to stand for the enigma of the spirit. They symbolize "the irrational mystery of body and soul"[148] that the rational men have denied in themselves and project onto women.

In *The Marble Faun* the Dark Lady is Miriam, who finds, after crime and repentance, a "wayside Paradise." The name "Miriam" may derive from the Hebrew word for "rebellion" and thus it may signal that Miriam is a transgressive Eve figure. Her family name, "Schaefer," in German means "shepherd," which may suggest her power of commitment and sacrifice. There is something certain about her, her ethnicity: there is "a certain rich Oriental character in her face."[149] Miriam, who is compared to the magnificent statue of Cleopatra, seems to share some of the Egyptian queen's physical features and maybe also some African blood. Like other Hawthornian dark ladies, she looks "fierce, voluptuous, passionate, tender, wicked, terrible, and full of poisonous and rapturous

[145] Leo B. Levy thinks that "her [Zenobia's] intimacy with nature contains the hint of mythological or magical powers greater than those worshipped by the Blithedale farmers in their devotion to the soil," 1978, p. 318.

[146] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1978, 31.

[147] Herzog compares Priscilla to the lamia figures of Romantic poetry, who are both mysteriously victims and agents of evil, p. 33.

[148] HERZOG, Kristin, p. 36.

[149] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1990, p. 22.

enchantment:"[150] "[. . .] as a nineteenth-century woman she still harbors the passionate natural force of a fossil age or a Roman goddess [. . .]."[151] As a *femme fatale*, Miriam has a power of fascination: she is bewitching. Like Hester or Zenobia, she has a passion for life and freedom that can be compared to the Arcadian joy of life of the Golden Age, which, on the other hand, brings sin and death into their lives. However, Miriam repents her sins and becomes penitent and thus undergoes a process of maturation.

Miriam, who considers Donatello a "simpleton," cannot have his childlike ways. Like Zenobia, she tries to put her past behind her: she gives her real name up, her status in society, her wealth. However, Miriam is unable to get rid of her oppressive and gloomy bygone times. As in other dark ladies, mystery surrounds her life, partly because of her unknown past: "She was a beautiful and attractive woman, but based, as it were, upon a cloud, and all surrounded with misty substance, so that the result was to render her sprite-like [. . .]."[152] We do not know if Miriam's life before the murder of the model was innocent or not. In fact, there are only rumors about her past, "wild and romantic fables:" "There was an ambiguity about this young lady [. . .] Nobody knew anything about Miriam, either for good or evil."[153]

The demonic woman appears as a tragic heroine, damned and defeated. Kenyon compares Miriam to the historical Queen Zenobia when he sees her kneeling before her pursuer: "What a terrible thralldom did it suggest! [. . .] the nameless vagrant must then be dragging the beautiful Miriam through the streets of Rome, fettered and shackled more cruelly than any captive queen of yore

[150] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1990, p. 127.

[151] HERZOG, Kristin, p. 43.

[152] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1990, p. 23.

[153] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1990, p. 20.

following in an Emperour's triumph."[154] Miriam believes that her life is determined by fate: "As these busts in the block of marble [. . .] so does our individual fate exist in the limestone of Time."[155] Later on in the story, Kenyon also says about Miriam, "You were innocent [. . .] I shudder at the fatality that seems to haunt your footsteps."[156] Many fictional gothic women have the feeling of being fated or doomed. However, Hawthorne's dark heroines oppose and struggle against destiny. According to Herzog, "In all these stories, [. . .] the women first seem to see their lives as determined by fate before they begin to sense their power to shape life" (42).

Hilda plays the role of the Fair Lady in *The Marble Faun*: the innocent woman who is transformed by suffering. She shares with Donatello a "strong, childlike spirituality:" "the cultural or religious simplicity of Hilda can make a person stumble as much as natural innocence."[157] Hilda's name stands originally for a "sharp sword" or a "battle maid." When Hilda says that Beatrice Cenci's punishment was fair, Miriam tells her, "Your innocence is like a sharp steel sword."[158] Hilda's naiveté is not completely seen as positive, since that is cause of her greatest flaw: her harsh judgement of sinners. Kenyon exclaims about her, "I always felt you, my dear friend, a terribly severe judge, and have been perplexed to conceive how such tender sympathy could coexist with the remorselessness of a steel blade. You need no mercy, and therefore know not how to show any!"[159] Because of her

[154] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1990, p. 108.

[155] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1990, p. 116.

[156] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1990, p. 430.

[157] HERZOG, Kristin, p. 40.

[158] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1990, p. 66.

[159] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1990, p. 384.

instinctive candidness, Hilda is insensitive and unable to understand other people's failings: "The yield of Hilda's repressive idealism in the moral realm is a militant righteousness committed to preserving a world of purity by casting tainted humanity into the category of the condemned."[160] Hilda needs to have a sin of her own to soften her judgement of the others. She feels guilty because she knows about Miriam's crime and is unable to help her friend, whom she fails in her greatest need. Hilda, as a sinner, becomes a stronger and more understanding woman. In contrast to Hilda's religious naiveté, Miriam embodies "a radically different conception of morality. What Hilda calls virtue Miriam calls mere fastidiousness; what Hilda calls fallen women Miriam calls fellow humans—Beatrice Cenci is 'still a woman, still a sister' [. . .] to Miriam whatever the technicalities of her innocence or guilt."[161]

Even though Hilda is a Fair Lady, she does not completely fit the stereotype of the conventional woman of her time. She is a self-sufficient female, who does not need love, as opposed to the opinion of many of her contemporary men, who thought that women could not live without love. Miriam says about Hilda,

> It is a mistaken idea which men generally entertain, that Nature has made women especially prone to throw their whole being into what is technically called Love. We have, to say the least, no more necessity for it than yourselves;—only, we have nothing else to do with our hearts. When women have other objects in life, they are not apt to fall in love. I can think of many women distinguished in art, literature, and science—and multitudes whose hearts and minds find good employment, in less ostentatious ways—who lead high,

[160] BRODHEAD, Richard, (Introduction), in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1990, p. xxi.

[161] BRODHEAD, Richard, (Introduction), in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1990, p. xxiii.

> lonely lives, and are conscious of no sacrifice, so far as your sex is concerned.[162]

Hilda is one of Hawthorne's female artists. She is a copyist of great pictures, from which she can discern their essential core, "that evanescent and ethereal life—that flitting fragrance, as it were."[163] Hilda, whose soul is pure and innocent, is able to seize in the portrait of Beatrice Cenci the "subtle mystery" of a terrible crime. In the introduction to *The Marble Faun,* Richard Brodhead states that Hilda represents more than a figure of the artist, "a way of conceptualizing the nature and meaning of art" (xx). Herzog argues that Hilda is aware of her limitations and, consequently, she only copies the great masters (45). Thus, she did not become the equivalent of a "female scribbler" in literature, which Hawthorne criticized so much. Brodhead thinks that Hilda's art worship is the consequence of an act of self-denial, the renunciation of her artistic creativity, as well as it "fosters her other habitual self-sacrifices and self-suppressions" (xxi). Miriam, however, has a very different conception of art, she "aims to be the maker of her own work, not the worshipper of another's."[164]

In Hawthorne's characterization of his women, his dark ladies seem to share essentially the same characteristics:

> We come to know this dark lady [Zenobia] under four different names—as Beatrice in the story *Rappaccini's Daughter*, Hester in *The Scarlet Letter*, Zenobia in *The Blithedale Romance*, and Miriam in *The Marble Faun*. Her unity as a character is established by the fact that in each of her four appearances she exhibits the same physical and mental qualities and plays substantially

[162] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1990, p. 121.

[163] HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1990, p. 58.

[164] BRODHEAD, Richard, (Introduction), in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1990, p. xxiii.

> the same role. Hawthorne's description of her is wonderfully expressive in the fullness of its sensual imaginings.[165]

Hawthorne's Dark Lady "is a richly endowed, glamorous brunette [. . .] who appears in the mythological tales, and in many passing allusions, as Eve, Pandora, Proserpina, or a nymph. [. . .] the Dark Lady is very much of this world [. . .] she is not native born; she belongs to another land [. . .] She is a fecund creature, gifted with an extraordinary range of talents—sewing, painting, gardening, nursing; and in her bolder (and perhaps misguided) moments she is a thinker. Hawthorne clearly admires this primal woman and takes elaborate pains to say that she is guiltless, or at least no more guilty than men; she simply follows the laws of her nature."[166] The Dark Lady's "sinful" nature is associated with a guilty past and her subversive personality. Hawthorne has great difficulty in finding a role for her in America because of her strong personality. Hawthorne's demonic female is self-willed and determined, in some aspects, the true representative of the New Woman. She has a transgressive office, which is related to her life force, vitality and passion. In his dark ladies, Hawthorne seems to represent an adequately complex and comparatively free relation to life, which would include a healthy sexuality. This is especially true of Hester in *The Scarlet Letter:* Hester not only keeps alive and, at least momentarily, expresses a glorious erotic life, but, in doing so, exemplifies what an existence, at once subversive and engaged with one's community, might mean. Thus we could say that Hawthorne's dark women stand for alternative values. In a talk contained in Salem website, Richard Millington emphasizes this aspect:

---

[165] RAHV, Philip, p. 338.

[166] MCPHERSON, Hugo, p. 223.

> As he [Hawthorne] creates female characters who are not simply containers for positive values but exemplars of a full and subversive alternative life—Zenobia, Miriam, pre-eminently Hester—Hawthorne, via his implicit repudiation of male flight from such women, indicts the thinness and rigidity of a society that seems at once to induce and endorse such poisonous evasiveness. (12184)

On the other hand, Hawthorne's three fair-haired maidens—Phoebe, Priscilla and Hilda—also have in common many personality traits: they are young and innocent women, who set an example of virtue and purity; they experience a transformation throughout the story: a process of awareness to adult life and, especially, sex; they represent an idealized notion of womanhood, the Angel in the House: their role is, at least apparently, mostly conservative, associated with the domestic ideology. These fair ladies are characterized as mediums of spirituality.[167] They are somehow fictional representations of Hawthorne's own wife, who meant his spiritual salvation, as he tells us in his letters.[168] Likewise, Hawthornian fair gothic heroines try to lead their men away from moral and intellectual positions that seem unhealthy: "in affirming the social virtues of hearth and home, [these gothic heroines] provide an alternative to the often misdirected intellectuality of those men who probe the dark side of human experience."[169] Thus the innocent maiden is the mate,

---

[167] See Virginia Ogden Birdsall's "Hawthorne's Fair-haired Maidens: The Fading Light," *PMLA*, 75 (1960), pp. 250-256.

[168] See Randall Stewart's *Nathaniel Hawthorne: A Biography*, New Haven, Conn., Yale Univ. Press, 1948, p. 54.

[169] RINGE, Ronald, p. 175.

> Hawthorne wants for his nineteenth-century heroes. Such men as Holgrave and Coverdale want a sunny, spiritual, golden-haired creature who will understand the rare nature of their love and accept their mercurial vision. They need a woman who will 'marry' them to the sunny realities of the empirical realm. The obsessively sexual Dark Lady really belong to the European tradition. The American hero's bride will be free of the Christian and Puritan taint—an immaculate Phoebe or Priscilla who, like Cadmus's Harmonia, will be at once a 'daughter of the sky' and a fecund 'domestic saint.'[170]

Sometimes Hawthorne uses one of his favorite artistic devices: the juxtaposition of the Dark and Fair Lady. Even though they seem so different, they have clear similarities: they are sensual and mysterious beings, related to nature. They can be victims of male power. They experience a process of transformation throughout the story. Although it is the Dark Lady who incarnates transgression, the Light Maiden is also sometimes a troublemaker. The passion and beauty of Hawthorne's dark ladies are expressions of a spiritual force: "Thus the dark woman progressively is a symbol of saving grace."[171] On the other hand, Hawthorne's fair women are also spiritual, but they do not lack the strength of their dark counterparts. The Fair Lady has some will of her own: she is not completely passive. As I mentioned before about Zenobia and Priscilla, some critics even think that the Dark Lady and Fair Lady may be a composite character. Barbara Lefcowitz and Allan Lefcowitz wonder whether

> [. . .] consciously or unconsciously he [Hawthorne] wished to perceive beneath the chaste surface of the

[170] MCPHERSON, Hugo, p. 224.

[171] HERZOG, Kristin, p. 52.

> fair New England heroine a propensity toward sensual involvement that differed only in appearance and perhaps degree from that of her dark-haired sisters—perhaps in order to rationalize his fascination with the latter, or to underscore the 'lurid intermixture' of good and evil that he found elsewhere to mark all that is complex and real in a morally ambiguous universe. (344)

Hawthorne seems to have an ambivalent attitude towards both his dark and fair heroines. As Philip Rahv suggests, Hawthorne shows ambiguity in dealing with the stereotype of the Dark Lady, since he destroys and glorifies her at the same time.[172] Another interesting fact is that Hawthorne seems to award his white ladies and punish his dark ones, who usually become tragic heroines.[173]

---

[172] Many critics state Hawthorne's disapproval of Hester in her role as a Dark Lady. Philip Rahv believes that Hawthorne exemplifies in Zenobia and Miriam his bias against the demonic woman. McPherson claims that "in Christian terms, the Dark Lady is Eve, cursed by the Puritans but admired by Hawthorne," p. 223-224. However, Nina Baym thinks that "in 'The Custom-House' Hawthorne openly condemns his ancestors for the act against the woman; he does not hesitate to consign them to hell for it. Further, he treats the letter and Hester with extreme disingenuousness, concealing and emphasizing in a manner that forces the reader to judge both favorably," in "The Romantic *Malgré Lui*: Hawthorne in "The Custom-House," in HAWTHORNE Nathaniel, 1988, p. 268. George Bailey Loring also claims that Hester as "Without deceit before the world, she stands for the most heroic person in all that drama," whereas Dimmesdale, "[. . .] far behind her in moral and religious excellence was the accredited religious teacher, who was her companion in guilt!," in ["Hester versus Dimmesdale"], in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, 1988, p. 188.

[173] In her article "Subverting the Subversive: Hawthorne's Containment of Hester Prynne in *The Scarlet Letter*," Melissa McFarland Pennell comments that Hawthorne seems to finally punish the subversiveness of his dark ladies, who are finally contained or eliminated by the end of each romance. McPherson believes that even though Hawthorne found his dark ladies formidable, he may have thought

> He [Hawthorne] is ingenious in devising occasions for celebrating her beauty, and conversely, for denigrating, albeit in equivocal language, her blonde rival—the dove-like, virginal, snow-white maiden of New England. But the two women stand to each other in the relation of the damned to the saved, so that inevitably the dark lady comes to a bad end while the blonde is awarded all the prizes—husband, love, and absolute exemption from moral guilt.[174]

However, even though the innocent Fair Maiden seems to succeed, she never truly becomes a real character and never achieves the deep psychology of Hawthorne's dark women,

> Despite, or indeed because of, his puritanical leanings, the delineation of a clear-cut dichotomy between the 'white' characterizations of pure good and their antitheses in the dark, seductive, guilty, and eventually defeated heroines like Hester, Beatrice Rappaccini, Zenobia, and Miriam was for Hawthorne an artistic burden fraught with doubts and inconsistencies. How else explain, for instance, his obvious fascination and involvement with the psychological profundities of the dark ladies—that is, prior to the point where he is compelled to reject them—and the superficial, even stereotyped treatment of their virginal counterparts, who become increasingly abstract and unreal on the precarious journey from Phoebe through Priscilla to Hilda? In his inability to cope with his white heroines as human characters, subject to the pains and flaws of sensuous existence, it seems that Hawthorne could only assert their anachronistic values by transmuting

---

of them "as a part of the European Judaeo-Christian past rather than of the American present," p. 234.

[174] RAHV, Philip, p. 338.

> them from their original material-symbolic context into analogues of pure intellectual theory. (342)[175]

In his fiction Hawthorne uses the gothic stereotypes of the Dark and Blonde Heroine in an entirely new light. He stresses the prejudices and image that the society of the time had about women, which are an intrinsic part of their characterization. Both the Dark and the Fair Lady are male projections: Hawthorne's *femme fatale* is sexualized and his White Maiden is etherealized,

> In all three of the Hawthorne novels [*The Scarlet Letter*, *The House of the Seven Gables* and *The Blithedale Romance*] [. . .] the myth of the American Eve as either light or dark, angelic or satanic, primitively noble or primitive savage, is not discarded but employed consciously in a new way. Hawthorne shows us the dependence of these images on individual and collective prejudices and the creative or destructive power in both light and dark figures. (37)

Hawthorne fuses so completely realistic and romantic elements in the depiction of his women that makes them rich and complex females who do not respond to a strict division of dark and fair ladies. His demonic, sensuous and foreign women are not always conventional *femmes fatales*, nor are his fair American ones always without a flaw:

> Hawthorne refrains from portraying women who are strictly redemptive figures or temptresses. Fair and

[175] Lefcowitz believes that Hawthorne's dark ladies are more complete and real characters than his blonde rivals. In fact, his white heroines have been generally seen as almost mere symbols: "conventional variations on a common romantic trope," p. 346. Waggoner thinks that, in his fair ladies, Hawthorne made an exception to his convictions about the nature of the human heart and that is why they are so hard to "believe in," in [Three Orders: natural, Moral, and Symbolic], in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, *The Scarlet Letter,* p. 322.

> dark lady, sensual and spiritual—these categories cannot be neatly separated in his works. A lovely clinging vine like Priscilla might be choking, and a passionate tigress like Miriam might save a man's soul. The new American Eve in Hawthorne appears outwardly like the old—dark or fair—but the value judgments of these images are relativized and sometimes reversed. What all his women have in common is aboriginal power.[176]

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

ABEL, Darrel, "Hawthorne's Hester," in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, *The Scarlet Letter,* Critical Edition, GROSS, Seymour; BRADLEY, Sculley, etc. (eds.), New York, Norton, 1988, pp. 300-308.

ABELE, Rudolph Von, *The Death of the Artist: A Study of Hawthorne's Disintegration*, The Hague, International Scholars Forum 2, 1955.

----------. "Holgrave's Curious Conversion," in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, *The House of the Seven Gables,* Critical Edition, GROSS, Seymour (ed.), New York & London, Norton, 1967, pp. 394-403.

ARVIN, Newton, *Nathaniel Hawthorne,* New York, 1929.

BAYM, Nina, "A Radical Reading," in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, *The Blithedale Romance,* Critical Edition, GROSS, Seymour;

[176] HERZOG, Kristin, p. 54.

MURPHY, Rosalie (eds.), New York & London, Norton, 1978, pp. 351-368.

----------. [Plot in *The Scarlet Letter*], in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, *The Scarlet Letter,* Critical Edition, GROSS, Seymour; BRADLEY, Sculley, etc. (eds.), New York & London, Norton, 1988, pp. 402-407.

BRAUDE, Ann, *Radical Spirits: Spiritualism and Women's Rights in Nineteenth Century America,* Boston, Beacon Press, 1989.

BUITENHUIS, Peter, *The House of the Seven Gables: Severing family and Colonial Tie,* Boston, Twayne's Masterwork Studies No. 66 Twayne Publishers, 1991.

CLEMENS, Valdine, *The Return of the Repressed: Gothic Horror from The Castle of Otranto to Alien,* (Suny series in psychoanalysis and culture) State University of New York Press, 1999.

CONGER, Syndy McMillen, "The Reconstruction of the Gothic Feminine Ideal in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights,*" in FLEENOR, Juliann, *The Female Gothic*, Montreal, Eden Press, Inc., 1983, pp. 91-106.

COTT, Nancy, *The Bonds of Womanhood*, New Haven, Yale UP, 1977.

CREWS, Frederick, *The Sins of the Fathers. Hawthorne's Psychological Themes*, New York, Oxford UP, 1966.

ELBERT, Monica, "Hester's Maternity: Stigma or Weapon?", *ESQ* 36 (1990), pp. 175-207.

FEIDELSON, Charles Jr., [The People of Boston], in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, *The Scarlet Letter,* Critical Edition, GROSS, Seymour; BRADLEY, Sculley, etc. (eds.), New York & London, Norton, 1988, pp. 371-375.

FETTERLEY, Judith, *The Resisting Reader: A Feminist Approach to American Fiction*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1978.

FIEDLER, Leslie A., *Love and Death in the American Novel*, New York, Stein and Day Publishers, 1966.

FLIBBERT, Joseph, "'That Look Beneath': Hawthorne's Portrait of Benevolence in *The House of the Seven Gables*", ROSENTHAL, Bernard (ed.), *Critical Essays on Hawthorne's The House of the Seven Gables,* New York, Hall, 1995, pp. 114-128.

FOGLE, Richard H., ["Realms of Being and Dramatic Irony], in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, *The Scarlet Letter,* Critical Edition, GROSS, Seymour; BRADLEY, Sculley, etc. (eds.), New York & London, Norton, 1988, pp. 308-315.

FOUCAULT, Michell, *Discipline and Punish*, SHERIDAN, Alan (Trans.), New York, Pantheon, 1977.

FREUD, Sigmund, "A Special Type of Choice of Object Made by Men," in *Works*, London, 1923, XI.

----------. "On the Universal Tendency to Debasement in the Sphere of Love," in *Works*, London, 1923, XI.

GATTA, John, "Progress and Providence in *The House of the Seven Gables*", *American Literature* 50 (March 1978), pp. 37-48.

GODDU, Teresa, *Gothic America. Narrative, History, and Nation,* New York, Columbia UP, 1997.

GOLLIN, Rita, *Nathaniel Hawthorne and the Truth of Dreams*, Baton Rouge, Louisiana State UP, 1979.

GRAY, Richard, "Hawthorne: A Problem: *The House of the Seven Gables*", in LEE, Robert A. (ed.), *Nathaniel Hawthorne: New Critical Essays,* London, Vision, 1982, pp. 88-109.

GROSS, Louis S., *Redefining the American Gothic: from Wieland to Day of the Dead* (Studies in Speculative Fiction, No 20), London, UMI Research Press (Ann Arbor), 1989.

HAMILTON, Edith, *Mythology*, New York, New American Library, 1969.

HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, *The House of the Seven Gables,* Critical Edition, GROSS, Seymour (ed.), New York & London, Norton, 1967.

----------. *The Blithedale Romance*, Critical Edition, GROSS, Seymour; MURPHY, Rosalie (eds.), New York & London, Norton, 1978.

----------. *The Scarlet Letter*, Critical Edition, GROSS, Seymour; BRADLEY, Sculley, etc. (eds.), New York & London, Norton, 1988.

----------. *Twice-Told Tales,* Pleasantville, N.Y./ Montreal, Reader's Digest, 1989.

----------. *The Marble Faun,* New York, Penguin Classics, 1990.

HERZOG, Kristin, *Women, Ethnics, and Exotics: Images of Power in Mid-Nineteenth-Century American Fiction,* Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 1983.

HOWE, Samuel G., *On the Causes of Idiocy,* Edinburgh, 1858.

LAWRENCE, Daniel Herbert, *Studies in Classic American Literature*, New York, Viking, 1962.

LEFCOWITZ, Barbara F. and Allen B., "Some Rents in the Veil: New Light on Priscilla and Zenobia", in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, *The Blithedale Romance,* Critical Edition, GROSS, Seymour; MURPHY, Rosalie (eds.), New York & London, Norton, 1978, pp. 341-350.

LEVERENZ, David, "The Ambivalent Narrator of *The Scarlet Letter*", in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, *The Scarlet Letter,* Critical Edition, GROSS, Seymour; BRADLEY, Sculley, etc. (eds.), New York & London, Norton, 1988, pp. 416-423.

LEVY, Alfred J., "*The House of the Seven Gables:* The Religion of Love", in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, *The Blithedale Romance,* Critical Edition, GROSS, Seymour (ed.), New York, Norton, 1967, pp. 459-472.

LEVY, Leo B., "Hawthorne's 'Voyage Through Chaos'", in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, *The Blithedale Romance,* Critical Edition, GROSS, Seymour; MURPHY, Rosalie (eds.), New York & London, Norton, 1978, pp. 311-324.

MCPHERSON, Hugo, *Hawthorne as Mythmaker: A Study in Imagination*, Toronto, Toronto UP, 1987.

MILLINGTON, Richard H., "The Meaning of Hawthorne's Women", Scholar's Forum, Hawthorne in Salem (http://www.hawthorneinsalem.org/page/10482), page citation: http://www.hawthorneinsalem.org/page/12184/.

----------. *Practicing Romance: Narrative Form and Cultural Engagement in Hawthorne's Fiction,* New Jersey, Princeton UP, 1992.

MURRAY, Peter B., "Mythopoesis in *The Blithedale Romance*", in ROUNTREE, Thomas J. (ed.), *Critics on Hawthorne,* Coral Gables, Fla., University of Miami Press, 1972.

O'CONNOR, William Van, "Conscious Naiveté in *The Blithedale Romance*", *Revue des Langues Vivantes*, 20 (Feb. 1954).

PENNELL, Melissa McFarland, "Subverting the Subversive: Hawthorne's Containment of Hester Prynne in *The Scarlet Letter*", Hawthorne in Salem (http://www.hawthorneinsalem.org/page/10482). Page citation: 12184.

POOVEY, Mary, *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer: Ideology as Style in the Works of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley, and Jane Austen*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1984.

PORTE, Joel, *The Romance in America: Studies in Cooper, Poe, Hawthorne, Melville, and James*, Middletown, Conn., Wesleyan University Press, 1969.

RAHV, Philip, "The Dark Lady of Salem", in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, *The Blithedale Romance,* Critical Edition, GROSS, Seymour; MURPHY, Rosalie (eds.), New York & London, Norton, 1978.

RINGE, Donald, *American Gothic: Imagination and Reason in Nineteenth-Century Fiction,* Kentucky, Kentucky UP, 1982.

STEIN, William Bysshe, *Hawthorne's Faust. A Study of the Devil Archetype,* Gainesville, Florida UP, 1953.

STONE, Lawrence, *Road to Divorce: England 1530-1987*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1990.

WAGGONER, Hyatt H., [Three Orders: natural, Moral, and Symbolic]", in HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel, *The Scarlet Letter,* Critical Edition, GROSS, Seymour; BRADLEY, Sculley, etc. (eds.), New York & London, Norton, 1988, pp. 315-325.

WHELAN, Robert Emmet Jr., "*The House of the Seven Gables:* Allegory of the Heart", *Renascence* 31 (Winter 1979), pp. 67-82.