

A HERITAGE FOR THE FUTURE: HAWTHORNESQUE UNFETTERING OF THE „IRON MEN“

Abstract

With his Scarlet Letter, Nathaniel Hawthorne really wanted to unfetter the New English Puritan scions, or at least make them think what has morally degraded the “Iron Men” and destroyed a steadfast faith of the primogenitors. Hawthorne’s answer is that they have forgotten to express emotions. The Scarlet Letter thus responds to the hypothetical questions raised by the Puritan Community of the seventeenth-century New England; however, the novel is not directed against the positive traits of the Puritan New Englandism, e.g., discipline, home life, education, etc. Moreover, Hawthorne’s opus has a universal philosophical and moral sense, although its tone is usually mildened by his humanity and subtle humor. All of that enabled Hawthorne’s voice to be keenly heard in the twenty-first century as well.

Key words: *Scarlet Letter, Nathaniel Hawthorne, New England, Puritan Community, symbolism*

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1. Birth of an Author

While trying to outline a Puritanized New Englandism in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter*, we aim to demonstrate that some of Hawthorne's earlier narratives correlate with the novel in terms of their subjection of the Puritans and their religious fervor to a harsh criticism. Hence, a biographical sketch included herein connects Hawthorne's austere life and Puritan heritage with his literary work, and a section of this research paper deals with the ulterior motives for the arousal of his New English legend.

An approach to the subject matter taken in this article implicates a delineation of fictitious characters and an in-depth analysis of an unfavorable Puritan milieu in *The Scarlet Letter* and other Hawthorne's tales, but the paper also takes a step further: it regards *The Scarlet Letter* as a vivid description of an average man confronted with an overrefined society, considering the work even more as a Hawthorne's ode to sincere love. The adultery committed by Hester Prynne with the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale is observed as an act that provides a firm basis for Hawthorne's story, but it is also noticed that the Puritan Community is only a stage and a cliché, well-known to the reading public of Hawthorne's New England. An effete society wherein a deformation of personalities was maybe most clearly visible, the Puritan Community serves to a deeper understanding of unvarnished truths. Consequently, a quest myth of *The Scarlet Letter* is related to a Bunyanesque one, for Hawthorne's characters also search for their place in the Puritan world.

Preparatory arrangements and thorough inquiries into reputable sources enable us to air yet another view about Hawthorne and his *Scarlet Letter*; to be precise, while bringing up a topic that could contribute to the Hawthorne scholarship mostly, we have a pronounced tendency to disprove a theory that *The Scarlet Letter* is just a historical novel discussing an unpardonable sin and nothing more. As this theory could still be found in some critiques on the cover pages of the late twentieth-century editions of Hawthorne's book, this article tries to bring a reader a little bit closer to Hawthorne, especially if the author is perused for the first time. Our aim is to show that both Hawthorne and his moral allegory offer much more. For that reason, this paper could pique someone's personal or academic interest in either Hawthorne himself, in his *Scarlet Letter*, or in the nineteenth-century American fiction in general.

It is very difficult to read *The Scarlet Letter* and remain indifferent thereto, or to express one's accurate impression concerning this Hawthorne's masterpiece in just a few words. In other words, *The Scarlet Letter* is one of those literary works whose intriguing theme makes a reader either display deep compassion for the protagonists

(in the way Hawthorne does) or be diametrically opposed to such an attitude. The reader's choice between these two possibilities primarily depends upon his or her own weltanschauung and his or her readiness to accept Hawthorne's reasons for Hester Prynne's adultery. Hester Prynne may, therefore, arouse sympathy of a liberal reader while simultaneously being scandalous to a Puritanized one. Moreover, long after a perusal of the last page, a mastery of style and an abundance of facts in *The Scarlet Letter* may cause the reader think that Hawthorne had still more information on the topic, kept for another occasion. Margaret Fuller summarized this feeling at best, commenting on Hawthorne's literary work on Brook Farm in 1841: having compared him to a long-sought artistic "Master Genius," she said that "we have a drop or two from that ocean" (qtd. in Cowley 5). Explicitly, Hawthorne himself had said that a Master Genius of the Age must be the one that "never illuminates the earth save when a great heart burns as the household fire of a grand intellect" (qtd. in Matthiessen 344), having thus reiterated the same general idea as the one presented in the eighteenth-century Germany during the so-called "time of geni" (*Geniezeit*) of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Friedrich Schiller (ca. 1771–1783). Hawthorne's perfected technique was also explicated in his personal letter to Horatio Bridge, sent from Concord, MA, on May 3, 1843 (qtd. in Cowley 679):

I would advise you not to stick too accurately to the bare fact, either in your descriptions or narrations; else your hand will be cramped, and the result will be a want of freedom that will deprive you of a higher truth than that which you strive to attain. Allow your fancy pretty free license, and omit no heightening touches because they did not chance to happen before your eyes. If they did not happen, they at least ought—which is all that concerns you.

The Scarlet Letter fully grasped a concept of an American "Master Genius" framed in such a way and thus represents Nathaniel Hawthorne at his best. Nevertheless, Hawthorne was also an end product of his unhealthy Puritan environment, characterized by an extreme dispassion. His *Scarlet Letter* consequently yearns for a raging fire to melt this "benumbed," "chill," "cold," "depressed," "dull" "feeble," "icy," "languid," "sluggish" and "torpid" surroundings. Seemingly reserved toward his contemporaries in conversation, Hawthorne was yet more open in his *Scarlet Letter* and in other works of his to any voracious reader who can read between the lines. It is then understandable that analogy, emblem, image, moral, symbol and type are Hawthorne's favorites in *The Scarlet Letter*. An exact description of the cruel Puritan world, a profound love between Hester Prynne and the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale that still exists in this ambiance, and a universal message of tolerance are the

elements that ascertain that in case of *The Scarlet Letter* his “household fire of a grand intellect” still burns.

Hawthorne’s friends addressed him as a fairy “Oberon” of the American letters (Matthiessen 226), and a short biographical sketch in this paper proves that this fanciful appellation, bestowed upon him after a personage immortalized in a medieval saga and in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* by William Shakespeare, related to him perfectly: like Hawthorne, this ruler who mounted a throne as the popular king of fairies and Titania’s husband was also indulged in reveries. Besides, we may consider Hawthorne’s monastic life as one of the possible reasons behind a relatively prolonged silence when it comes to a critical evaluation of *The Scarlet Letter* in the United States of America: it is namely true that the author’s pronounced unpretentiousness greatly contributed to this waiting time in addition to the book’s provocative theme. Many of Hawthorne’s written documents state that he was rather concerned about a reaction that a literary work protecting an adulteress could trigger in an environment wherein the Puritan prejudices were still very much alive. Hawthorne displayed timidity and skepticism about *The Scarlet Letter* especially when the Whigs ousted him from the Salem Custom House. His answer to this ouster was so characteristic of him: a still greater suffering in an utter solitude of his room. Peculiarly, Hawthorne held *The Scarlet Letter* “somber” and favorized “The Custom House,” a biting satire on the Salem Whigs that serves as the book’s introduction. Of course, all aspects of this Hawthornian modesty and all connections between Nathaniel Hawthorne and his New English world cannot be treated in a single article: the last word about Hawthorne and his New Englandism is consequently not yet said, but the witty lines of this noted and prolific author surely deserve further objective appraisal.

2. Bringing About a New English National Unity

A Puritan past of early Salemites and Pittsfieldians excited Nathaniel Hawthorne’s imagination. To be exact, both Salem and Pittsfield, MA, had tightly embraced the fundamental tenets of the so-called “New English theology,” propagated from about 1730 to 1880 by Jonathan Edwards and his faithful followers. This principally Calvinist theology can be briefly explained as a strict work-and-pray principle. For the Massachusetts Salem, once a bustling northeastern seaport, the existence in a Puritan theocracy was even more important than for Pittsfield, which then remained just a rock-ribbed western city. All generations of inhabitants in Salem, MA, a city that traces back to 1626, could face the far-reaching consequences of Puritanization;

likewise, Genesis (14:8) and Psalms (76:2) ascertain that even Salem's toponym is from the Holy Writ, wherein it incipiently was a Melchizedek's settlement associated with Jerusalem thereafter. Nonetheless, Hawthorne's intense interest was especially piqued by a "haggish" segment of Salem's history, wherein his remote ancestors also took a significant part. This historical segment pertains to the terrible sorcery ordeals of 1692. According to *The University Desk Encyclopedia* (666, 885, 904), they were kindled by an early opus of Cotton Mather (1663–1728), an American preacher and a scion of the eminent savants. This is peculiarly valid for Mather's *Memorable Providences Relating to Witchcraft and Possessions*, a 1689 book that Hawthorne read as well. Eventuating in nineteen persons being hanged, the Salem witch-hunt made Samuel Sewall, one of the harsh trial judges together with a Hawthorne's ancestor, humbly apologize for his misdeeds and even become the first abolitionist in 1697.

With some noticeable differences, Salem and Pittsfield were the cradles of Scriptural zealotry on one side and of an unavoidable sanctimony on the other, so Hawthorne was simultaneously attracted and repelled by both extremes. Hawthorne was subsequently assisted by a clear-cut ascendancy that these two nurturing communities attained over him to have a keen perception of all the undeniable advantages and to put up with their considerable inconveniences. Therefore, he made a decision not to go from one New English Puritan extreme (i.e., religious zealotry and pietism) to the other (i.e., sanctimony and biting criticism on the account of all non-Puritans). It was a firm resolution that a large majority of Hawthorne's compatriots found noticeably different from their prevalent opinion on a strict adherence to the Puritan creed, a safeguard of public morals, or life in general.

A deliberate attempt to bring the faith back to its Biblical originals while "purifying" it of all the Roman Catholic "degenerations" and "royal luxury," a Puritan theology promoted under the auspices of the Anglican Church was extremely adamant about any opposition. This reformatory tendency was especially pronounced in the seventeenth century, when most of the English Puritans had to flee to New England because their fervent wish to change both the ruling and the ecclesiastic hierarchy mostly remained unfulfilled in their motherland; however, the New English states, and especially the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, were a safe haven for the Puritans for many years. Therefore, a strong influence of Puritan moralization can still be felt there. An initial objective of the Massachusetts Puritans was to make Puritanism an "anti-dissentient" initiation into the mysteries of faith, which, as such, should have been conducted by the clericalists, considered to be "infallible" while exercising a "sober" judgment of a higher, God-given law. The New English Puritanism was

principally Calvinist¹ and readily accepted an established norm of “absolute predestination.” The Puritans espoused an ideology of practicing “peaceful asceticism,” vindicating salvational submission to any reign.²

At the commencement of his professional career, Nathaniel Hawthorne inconclusively embraced Puritanism but subsequently brought about a sagacious reconciliation of his own doctrinaire beliefs with the noble traditions of his common ancestors. This was a peculiar but effective conglomeration of Puritan and Roman Catholic conceptions actualized in a Hawthornesque way. Nevertheless, these canons also prove that Hawthorne was filled with deep veneration for his predecessors: he confided in a Puritan foreordainment of beings but simultaneously categorically refused any gross Puritan exaggeration, he greatly admired the deceased because of their persistence in a genuine repentance although he held that a committed transgression can also be remitted, as the Catholics do, and he consequently considered that a just punishment for peccancy, present from time immemorial, has to be administered to the coming generation unless previously exculpated or, at least, frankly confessed by the primogenitors. But what Hawthorne deemed most prominent was a reliance on a Biblical interpersonal fraternity that regards all manipulations as an unpardonable infringement on one’s intimacy (Cowley 12f). This notion shows that a Biblical imagery and the man himself were of great importance for the Puritans and Hawthorne alike.

Namely, as a trueborn son of the Puritan State,³ Hawthorne swore fidelity to the heart and to the deity of Christ only: his definition of the former as a sanctuary of person’s innermost feelings conforms to the Christian Science, while a description of the latter as the Prince of Peace is in accordance with the Old Testament (Isa. 9:6). In Hawthorne’s opinion, the heart is a sign that the divine attributes in man are present in a superb form; moreover, it is his inviolable sanctity. We should bear this essential fact in mind especially when pondering over *The Scarlet Letter*: to be precise, the Puritans who utterly forgot this absolute truth are subjected to Hawthorne’s unsparing criticism. Hawthorne attaches similar importance to Christ—having redeemed the

¹ “Calvin, Jean,” *Enciklopedija Leksikografskog zavoda*, gen. ed. Miroslav Krleža, 2nd ed., 6 vols. (Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod, 1969). Henceforth referred to as *ELZ*. —See also “Jean Calvin,” ©2014 *Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc.*

² “Puritanci,” *ELZ*. —Cf. also “Puritanci,” *Hrvatska enciklopedija, mrežno izdanje*, gen. ed. Slaven Ravlić. ©2013 Leksikografski zavod *Miroslav Krleža*. All rights reserved.

³ Puritan State is one of the vernacular names for Massachusetts. It honors the Pilgrim Fathers, a religious sect of the Puritan extraction that founded Plymouth Colony in 1620. —See George Earle Shankle, *American Nicknames: Their Origin and Significance*, 2nd ed. (New York: H. W. Wilson Company, 1955).

humankind even subsequent to the Fall of Man,⁴ He is Hawthorne's inspiration of profound love.

Hawthorne himself was a talented artist and an established author who demonstrated a consummate skill, and thus he was somewhat closer to the Omniscient than the others are: he could also transform a blissful ignorance of his Puritanized New English readership into a thorough knowledge, which could associate him with the Isaian Wonderful Counselor. Therefore, Hester Prynne of his *Scarlet Letter* similarly turns a Miltonic lapse into a fortunate one.⁵ Again, the authenticity of physical geography, historical facts, or any applied science retreat from Hawthorne's deep devotion to the divinity of the soul.⁶

Notwithstanding the enshrinement of a dark past as a lasting impression which Hawthorne's wording in *The Scarlet Letter* has, it is exactly this auctorial humanism that cites a cogent reason why the book is not only indistinctly recalled as an ephemeron of fashion. Styled "romance," this voluminous writing incorporates the well-nigh poetic effusions and often serves as Hawthorne's entrée into the mundane affairs of his coevals. With a genesis of its ideas, *The Scarlet Letter* is thus a long-explored avenue to the efflorescence of an inventive esthetic genius, ivory-towered for quite a long time.

Hawthorne fabricated a coherent story under a domination of action or outstanding past events, being regularly radically different from his confreres in the inditement. Therein, any native Bay Stater,⁷ still attaching a noteworthy weight to a durable legacy, can instantaneously be recognized. A detail from the New English quotidian life proves how strong an influence this Puritan heritage exerted on Hawthorne and his fellow citizens: specifically, in 1660, the Puritans even interdicted the celebration of Christmas and singing of noëls because the "plebs" was vastly amused and became wholly forgetful of their exegesis. Although the situation was made slightly less delicate by the Restoration and, exceptionally, Charles Dickens' (1812–1870) nostalgia for an irresistible charm exuded by the Yuletide, Boston, extolled as the Athens of America, did not see the cheer of the Nativity till 1856,

⁴ In the Christian Theology, the Fall of Man denotes the original sin committed by Adam and Eve that all of us have to expiate. —Cf. Gen. 3.

⁵ I.e., the "fortunate fall." —See John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Book2, 14–17.

⁶ "Literature, Western," *Encyclopædia Britannica: Macropædia*, 1978 ed. —Cf. also thereupon "Western Literature," ©2014 *Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.*

⁷ Bay Stater is one of the sobriquets for a denizen of Massachusetts. Massachusetts is known as the Old Bay State after a cove of the Atlantic Ocean off its eastern seashore. —Cf. *Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language: Updated Revised Deluxe Edition* (New York/Avenel, NJ: Gramercy Books, 1996).

having remained in its tranquil Beantown mood up to the arrival of the German immigrants.⁸

For this reason, Hawthorne's text offers to the New Englanders exactly what they want to find therein, i.e., the well-known foci that remind them of the scenes from their own family albums. Hawthorne's Puritan heritage in *The Scarlet Letter* thus makes his American readers enskied at perusing the well-turned and ethereally Latinized phrases and allegories because they are familiar to them: they could find them in the old books, they could hear them from the educated people, and they are exposed to them during the Sunday Masses in any New English church. The figures thence create an easily realizable black-and-white schism and repeatedly endue both the impetuous and the placid human natures, like in the Hester Prynne – Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale – Roger Chillingworth triangle. In an old manner of John Bunyan's Christian allegory encountered in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Hawthorne's Puritans also formulate an emblematic definition that repeatedly tallies with an archaically preconceived notion of local curates—the one according to which the earthlings are impuissant and fated by an unrescinded thearchic decree and their own temporality.

Irrespective thereof, Hawthorne is among the first authors in the United States of America who have painted a detailed psychic picture and have offered a satisfactorily lucid explanations for the exhibited modes and behaviors of their literary work personae. Hawthorne did not hesitate over a clear articulation of veritable phantasmagorias demonstrated by the prior American Dream, but he wanted to rectify the glaringly perpetrated misdeeds first; thus, for Hawthorne, hypocrisy and moral rigidity of the Puritan Community in *The Scarlet Letter* is far more serious a problem, while the adultery of Hester Prynne comes only thereafter. Nonetheless, Hawthorne's honorable intentions were announced like a tacit warning of a fosterer to his fellow townsfolk, not as a sternly issued reprimand or a vilification of his native soil.

Despite the fact that the modern Salemites accepted and respected most of these Hawthorne's warnings and his fatherly care for the future of New England, an auctorial life in what once was a Puritan stronghold and the City of Witches was more than difficult: it was more tolerance than mutual love that existed between Hawthorne and his surroundings, so he mostly felt like a lost soul. Namely, in his *America's*

⁸ E.g., a television broadcast titled *Send 'Round the Song: Mr. Randall's Fireside Christmas*, directed by John Harper Goodhue, narrated by Tony Randall, and produced by the European American Industries, actually an adaptation of the PBS' 1992 show *A Christmas Celebration: Send 'Round the Song*. Shot in Connecticut, this television motion picture featured a host and a group of children discovering the history of carols performed by the operatic stars such as José Carreras, Plácido Domingo, and Luciano Pavarotti.

Coming of Age (1915), the art critic Van Wyck Brooks (1886–1963) described Salem in the same way as many other American authors before and after him: a satellite city of “thaumaturgies,” merchant shipping, and wait-and-see policy (Matthiessen 197).

3. A Yankeedom Legend Arises

While intently thinking about a sober reality of the Puritan life and a fervent wish to escape to irreality, which is inevitably made by such a drab existence, the author is afraid of the civilian authorities that can draw the boundaries between the socially acceptable and socially unacceptable so easily. Hawthorne keeps asking himself why, then, does even an average person still starve for the absolute when an incontrovertible fact that the people are mortal makes it paradoxical. Making a striking example out of his Hester Prynne, Hawthorne generalizes her persona and asks what prods us into the action. The impulses that he cites as an answer to this rhetorical question are our basic unerring instincts, an unpredictable subconsciousness, and our fantasies. *The Scarlet Letter*, however, opts for the instincts as having a major role. The reason is quite simple: Hawthorne is a man of nature, and an instinctive act is the most natural of the three impulses mentioned above. Only instincts cannot be subjected externally, and therefore the protagonists, i.e., Hester Prynne, Pearl, and the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale, mostly act instinctively. Their self, their emotions, and their generosity are thus unspoiled.

The pages of *The Scarlet Letter* criticize the seventeenth-century New English hypocrisy and a lack of tolerance and emotions. Therefore, this Hawthorne’s fiction is permeated with an unquelled fatherly disturbance and the announcements of the tragically harbored Puritan and Whiggish illusions. As a personification of an effete Puritan society, Chillingworth shows the far-reaching consequences of the overweening ambitions; furthermore, he thence acts almost like the Devil himself as to make his impression strong enough. With his language being allegorical and Puritanically worded for the sake of his New English audience, Hawthorne still prophesizes that the Fall will follow and that a profound love must (and will) eventually win. That is the reason why this fascinating but gripping Hawthorne’s “romance” is full of underlying motives from his New English surroundings, living and popular Puritan legends, or even the myths he created himself.

Like in the Ancient Greek tragedy of *Antigone*, Hester Prynne is a female lead elevated from an anonymous adulteress to a heroic status because she propagates a noble idea, although the idea itself is antagonistic to the Puritan Community. Also of

an aristocratic extraction as well as Antigone, Hester Prynne *is* an adulteress, but she is even more the love and “Divine Maternity” personified. For Hester Prynne, her love, her daughter, and her beloved one, the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale, are her “Polynices.” Hester Prynne cannot be against her heart—and that is her “tragic flaw.”

The adultery committed by Hester Prynne with the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale is an inexpressible sin against a close-knit 17th-century Puritan Community, and consequently both wrongdoers have to recant it irrespective of their readiness to make a willing confession. Hester Prynne is reminded of her transgression twice: by a scarlet “A” embroidered on all of her robes and by an incorporation of her peccancies, her daughter Pearl. The Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale demonstrates less valor to own it than Hester Prynne does, and thus he eats his heart out. Nonetheless, this exactly was Hawthorne’s clearly made intention: he aimed to show a “charmed circle,” i.e., that doing an unmitigated evil can only end up in a disaster or in an incalculable suffering. Specifically, a sinner tries hard to alleviate it and often does wrong again while desperately wanting to acculturate to a community. That is a cogent reason why Hawthorne’s unsuspecting victims in *The Scarlet Letter* are not only the adulterers Hester Prynne and the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale but also Roger Chillingworth, Hester Prynne’s cuckolded and vendetta-leading husband, for there is only one way out of this viciousness: to show repentance. Hester Prynne takes herself and Pearl out of this circle by her kind deeds at the end of the novel, and the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale does the same by his confession; nevertheless, Roger Chillingworth is destroyed in his wish to revenge himself. Yet, the rebels against a tyranny of the blue laws in the Puritan Boston, Hester Prynne and the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale, capture Hawthorne’s sympathy: unlike Roger Chillingworth’s, their sin is not committed against Hawthorne’s inviolable sanctity—the human soul.

The meaning of symbols in *The Scarlet Letter* is connotative and tremendous, because the characters themselves are symbols (Roper 112): Hester Prynne embodies a profound love, the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale indicates an ecumenical spirit, while Roger Chillingworth denotes a one-track Puritan mind. The romance is set within a conceptual framework of the Puritan Community that even domineers over the picked-up action in Chapters 1 to 8. Subsequently, Hawthorne minutely describes the Puritan Community while assigning the key roles to Roger Chillingworth (Chapters 9 to 12), Hester Prynne (Chapters 13 to 20), and the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale (in the closing chapter).

As in the German Romanticism, an almost impenetrable forest is one of the essential details. It stands for an unabridged freedom as the only place where Hester

Prynne may put off the ignominious "A" and let her hair down, it is a trackless wilderness wherein Hester Prynne and the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale were natural and where a deadly sin was committed, it is a turbulent life, and, finally, it is a strong opposition to the Puritan municipal closeness, penitentiary, or to the scaffolds of the pillory in the Boston marketplace.

Still, however known Hawthorne might be to the closed literati circles, a myth around Puritanism in his *Scarlet Letter* and in other short stories of his is yet to be dispelled by many non-American readers. This research paper is but a small sincere effort put forth for that purpose.

BAŠTINA ZA BUDUĆNOST: HAWTHORNSKO OSLOBAĐANJE IZ OKOVA „ŽELJEZNIH LJUDI“

Sažetak

Svojim je Grimiznim slovom Nathaniel Hawthorne doista želio otkovati novoengleske puritanske potomke ili ih barem nagnati na razmišljanje o tome što je čudoredno ponizilo te „željezne ljude“ i uništilo čvrstu vjeru pradjedova. Hawthorneov je odgovor da su zaboravili izraziti osjećaje. Grimizno slovo stoga odgovara na pretpostavljena pitanja puritanske zajednice sedamnaestostoljetne Nove Engleske; međutim, ova pripovijest nije usmjerena protiv prihvatljivih osobina puritanskoga novoengleštva, npr. stege, domaćega života, obrazovanja itd. Štoviše, Hawthorneovo stvaralaštvo ima opći mislilački i čudoredni smisao, iako je njegov prizvuk često ublažen njegovim čovječtvom i istančanom duhovitošću. Sve to omogućilo je da se Hawthorneov glas jasno čuje i u 21. stoljeću.

Ključne riječi: *Grimizno slovo, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Nova Engleska, puritanska zajednica, znakovnost*