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THE ROLE OF WOMAN IN NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE'S NOVEL THE SCARLET LETTER AND WILLIAM FAULKNER'S NOVEL AS I LAY DYING

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Abstract

In this study the most significant female characters in Nathiel Hawthorne's novel *The Scarlet Letter* and William Faulkner's novel *As I Lay Dying* are analyzed in terms of the roles in the society. The study is composed through literature review. In both of these novels, the female characters, Hester and Addie have illegitimate children. Even the thoughts of the women on them are that they have committed sin and they should confess and pray God for salvation. While Hawthorne's character, Hester is so brave to confess her sin, Faulkner's character, Addie doesn't confess her sin. After she dies, the sin is explained through other characters' thoughts, dialogues and inner monologues of her on past. When these two females are dealt with on moral roles given them, they are seen as the women who do not obey the role that women should be faithful to their husband. In both novels, it is explained that women have responsibilities towards their husbands and children. They mustn't act against the roles given by the society. In addition, Hester and Addie are the women who exemplify women who are the defiants to the roles of genders and careless about them. To conclude, in both *The Scarlet Letter* and *As I Lay Dying* the roles of woman are emphasized.

Keywords: Woman Roles, Female Characters, American Literature.

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Nathaniel Hawthorne'un Romanı *the Scarlet Letter* ve William Faulkner'in Romanı *as I Lay Dying*'de Kadının Rolü

Öz

Bu çalışmada Nathiel Hawthorne'un romanı *The Scarlet Letter* ve William Faulkner'in romanı *As I Lay Dying*'daki en önemli kadın karakterler toplumdaki rolleri açısından incelenmiştir. Çalışma literatür taraması ile oluşturulmuştur. Bu romanların her ikisinde de kadın karakterler, Hester ve Addie'nin gayri meşru çocukları vardır. Onlar hakkında kadınların düşünceleri bile günah işledikleri ve kurtuluş için günah çıkarıp Tanrı'ya dua etmeleri gerektiğidir. Hawthorne'nun karakteri, Hester günahını itiraf edecek kadar cesur iken, Faulkner'in karakteri Addie günahını itiraf etmez. Öldükten sonra, günahı diğer karakterlerin düşünceleri, diyalogları ve geçmişi hakkındaki iç monologlar aracılığıyla açıklanır. Bu iki kadın kendilerine verilen ahlaki roller konusunda ele alındığında, kadınların eşlerine sadık olma rolüne uymayan kadınlar oldukları görülür. Her iki romanda da kadınların kocalarına ve çocuklarına karşı sorumlulukları olduğu açıklanmaktadır. Toplum tarafından verilen rollere karşı hareket etmemelidirler. Buna ek olarak, Hester ve Addie cinsiyetlerin rollerine karşı gelen ve onlar konusunda tasasız olan kadınları örnekleyen kadınlardır. Sonuç olarak, hem *The Scarlet Letter* hem de *As I Lay Dying*'de kadının rolleri vurgulanmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kadın Roller, Kadın Karakterler, Amerikan Edebiyatı.

INTRODUCTION

Being 19th century prominent American writers, Nathaniel Hawthorne and William Faulkner were so successful in composing best seller books of American Literature. They create different female and male characters about whom they display detailed information by way of symbolism, descriptions, dialogues and different points of view. In the popular novel *The Scarlet Letter*, Hawthorne tells the story of a self-confident, strong and independent female character, the protagonist, Hester Prynne. "In this fictional account of seventeenth century Boston, Hawthorne's searing example Hester Prynne embodies what then was society's use of punishment of humiliation" (Brilliant, 1989, 1357). The novel focuses on her adultery and attitude of community towards her. Since Hawthorne has Puritan relations in the past, his explanations on this community are well-done in novel. The writer shows the female protagonist as brave woman, like a hero. Even though the strict rules and customs of Puritan community sentence her to carry a capital "A" on her cloth to remind her sin, she doesn't care about this punishment and doesn't tell her child's real father's name. She is the woman who can endure the difficult life in the Puritan society. That is, even other women in this community condemn her because of the adultery. Even in these hard situations, she manages to tolerate

The Role of Woman in Nathaniel Hawthorne's Novel *The Scarlet Letter* and William Faulkner's Novel *As I Lay Dying*

everything against her and the isolation that is the result of her punishment. Demonstrating what is to be a woman who commits adultery in the Puritan harsh environment; Hawthorne helps readers visualize protagonist's position and struggles. He depicts that even in community having strict rules; a woman can be so courageous compared to a man. When the roles given to woman in Puritan society took into consideration, Hester is viewed as sinful for betraying her husband who is far away for some time. To the Puritan people's strict rules, a woman should be modest, pure and honorable human being who does not commit sin and does not deceive her husband. Hawthorne shows that Hester is a woman who does not obey these rules but has courage to bear to be punished publicly.

Likewise, in William Faulkner's novel *As I Lay Dying*, the writer focuses on a female character, Addie Bundren. "Addie is the center of the novel's plot, the hub around which the monologue-spokes revolve, the "reason" carrying the Bundren wagon to Jefferson" (Urgo, 1988, 15). Having an extramarital affair with another man when she was married Anse, this female character commits adultery, like Hester in Hawthorne's novel. Since Addie doesn't love her husband, she hates her children. Faulkner shows that Addie is careless and isn't a religious person. She doesn't believe in God. She always has negative thoughts about her life. This is because of the fact that as a woman she is compulsory to do everything in their farm from the things in the house to the works in the garden. Therefore, to her, everything is burden on her. In addition, her father's utterance before marrying Anse is so influential on her thought on women's lives. This utterance is that women stay dying in the world. When this fact is considered, Addie feels that she is unhappy and loveless. Faulkner displays all these facts through the inner monologues and different points of view in the novel. The novel starts with Addie's death and her coffin is carried to Jefferson where her own family and relatives are living. This travelling is also desired by Addie before she died. Since she wants to revenge from his husband, she wishes to be buried in her own town to where it takes too much time. To Addie, if her husband takes her coffin to there, he will be very bored and tired of long way. In addition to this hatred, adultery and an illegitimate child, the writer demonstrates that Addie is not a real maternal figure as she doesn't love her children from Anse and she is indifferent to them. Even though she warns her children not to deceive anybody, in fact she deceives her husband and children. When Hawthorne's female character, Hester and Faulkner's female character, Addie is analyzed, it may be said that Hester is so courageous to confess his sin while Addie is not so brave to confess her illegitimate child. The two writers of the novels are so prosperous in portraying female

characters's lives in which there are sin and difficulties. Moreover, both Hawthorne and Faulkner reveal the exact roles of women in a man dominated society by the help of the thoughts and dialogues of other characters in the novel.

1. Nathaniel Hawthorne's Life and Literary Works

Being Nathaniel and Elizabeth Clarke Manning Hathorne's son, Nathaniel Hawthorne was born in 1804, in Massachusetts. William Hathorne who was his great great grandfather was one of the members of the first family that emigrated from England and he was known for his violent convicting. Hawthorne was also one of the descendants of Puritans. When he grew older, he decided to change his surname by adding the letter "w", since he didn't want to be infamous. In fact, one of his elder relatives was a judge, too and was known for his severe decisions on witches' cases, therefore he was villainous. Due to this fact, Hawthorne chose to be known with his new surname.

His father was a captain and died in 1808. After his death, his family gets financial support from his mother's brothers. During his childhood, he had leg injury and these immobile days helped him to have seire for reading. So, first step for becoming a writer was made by him. Then he attended Bowdoin College by the help of his uncles. At this college he met Henry Wadsworth Longfellow who would be a famous poet in the following years.

Hawthorne was a careless student. Since he missed his family too much after graduating from the college, he turned back to home. He stayed there for twelve years. During this stay, he wrote a lot of stories including *The Hollow of the Three Hills* and *an Old Woman's Tale*. Then he wrote *My Kinsman, Major Molineux* and *Roger Malvin's Buriel*. These two tales were his most significant stories. In 1828 he published the novel *Fanshawe* which is about his college years. Moreover, he published *Twice Told Tales* in 1837 ("Nathaniel Hawthorne Biography", 1). As he didn't earn so much money from these publications, he started to work at Boston Custom House.

He became a member of transcendentalist community and in 1842 he married Sophia Peabody who is also a transcendentalist. They settled in Concord. While he was joining the Brook Farm community, he met Ralph Waldo Emerson and Hery David Thoreau who were the important figures of Romatic Movement. Hawthorne and Sophia had three children. Due to some debts, he moved to Salem. He became a surveyor at Salem Custom House and had the opportunity to gain some money for his family. In 1846, in the same year, his new work *Mosses from an Old Manse* was published. Because of some political

The Role of Woman in Nathaniel Hawthorne's Novel *The Scarlet Letter* and William Faulkner's Novel *As I Lay Dying*

reasons he was fired from his job as a surveyor. Then he lost his mother. During these bad days, he had time for writing his masterpiece *The Scarlet Letter*. He published this novel in 1850. The book became best seller.

Hawthorne wasn't so relaxed in Salem due to the Puritan snarings. Therefore, he and his family moved to Lenox where he became a friend of Herman Melville. There he wrote new works *The House of the Seven Gables*, *Blithedale Romance* and *Tangle Wood Tales*. After Franklin Pierce who was one of his friends from college became the president, Hawthorne was appointed as an American Consul to Britain, so he began to live in England for five years. During this period, he was inspired for his novel *Our Old Home*. Then he published his last novel *The Marble Faun* in 1860. This year he took his family to Massachusetts. His health started to fail and he died in 1864.

Nearly all of his writing includes New England. In some of his works, he demonstrates Puritan life morality. Being a transcendentalist, Hawthorne's writings are seen to be part of Romantic Movement. Lots of his works shows moral messages and generally the themes that he used are related to the evil and sin of humanity that naturally covers these qualities. He was inspired by Puritans, too much.

Hawthorne is praised for moral purity and sentimentality in his writings. His novel also known as romance *The Scarlet Letter* is seen as one of the excellent works of the American imagination. He wrote this work using symbolism and dealing with psychological themes. Moreover, this work helped him to be known as one of the most significant writers, romancers and realists in America. As Zheng states (2017, 378), "The Scarlet Letter is a cultural allegory, in which the author directly tells the future of Puritanism. The Scarlet Letter is a sample in which America Romanticism adapted itself to America Puritanism." In addition, in this work accusation to his society and Puritan America is viewed.

In his romance, novels and short stories, he creates many different female characters. Some of these females are self-confident and strong, like Hester Prynne, the protagonist of the novel *The Scarlet Letter*. Some of these females demonstrate and embody the gender expectation of the society for being women. Some of them exist as rescuer of men. In addition, Hawthorne shows some females in his works as the characters who are victimized at the hands of men. By displaying these different female characters, the writer helps the readers visualize the time of the Puritan society and also his own society. He also presents the gender relations in his time.

2. Puritan Women

It is true that Hawthorne inherited from Puritan ancestors a certain tenseness of fibre, a sensitiveness of conscience, a conviction of the reality of the moral life. It is also true that he was intensely interested in Puritanism as an historic phenomenon. It gave him the maternal he needed (Perry, 2001, 9).

As stated above, Hawthorne has Puritan ancestors and he demonstrates the stern life of Puritan community in most of his works. Since the novel, *The Scarlet Letter* set in seventeenth century Puritan Boston, one should analyze the life of puritan women. In early colonial America women were required to marry at an early age. After marrying a man, a woman lost her identity. The Puritan women were not allowed to vote. Their education was very scanty. After their husbands died, the widows could not have a property and could not work if they remarried. In addition, a married woman could not sign contracts. Her husband possessed everything. That is, the Puritan society gave the roles for women and they could not go outside of these roles and rules. Women were locked in the domestic sphere while men were busy in the political issues. Additionally, “Women were considered as weak and were therefore considered fit to cooperate with Satan” (Dramalı, 2006, 13 cited in Ürkmez, 2013, 116).

During the seventeenth century, women and children were treated harshly by the Puritan society. Women were seen as the means of Satan and only children were seen as the property of their fathers. Similarly, in the novel *The Scarlet Letter*, “Hester is looked down upon as if she is some sort of demon from hell that commits a terrible crime” (Zheng, 2017, 378). They married for love. Apparent courting was not allowed. Arranged marriages were not seen. Marrying first cousin was forbidden. In addition, to Puritans, abortion was not an approved thing. They were harsh parents. In addition, “in an ideal situation, man and woman should take up their natural role and not transgress the area that was assigned to them” (Eeckman, 2008, 29).

To Puritans, Eve’s sin shows woman’s inherent moral ineffectualness. So, in *The Scarlet Letter* Dimmesdale emphasizes that the protagonist’s salvation depends on guiding her daughter to Heaven (Qin, 2010, 35). Woman’s qualities cause one to become sinful. Moreover, Puritan women had to love her husband and obey him since God gave them this duty and they had to assist the men. In Puritan society, women had to cover their hair and arms and dress lowly. If they did not dress modestly, they would be guilty and be whipped in

The Role of Woman in Nathaniel Hawthorne's Novel *The Scarlet Letter* and William Faulkner's Novel *As I Lay Dying*

front of the public. If men committed adultery or there was physical tyranny, women could divorce. In Puritanism, men and women were viewed as spiritual equals. The men could be leaders of church while women had to be moral and well disciplined. Purity was also a significant issue for women and Bible was the source of law. When *The Scarlet Letter* is analyzed, it can be said that "The Puritanism and its strict rules along with its influences upon the individuals have been rigorously portrayed throughout the novel" (Yahya, 2018, 56).

3. The Role Of Woman In *The Scarlet Letter*

The novel *The Scarlet Letter* demonstrates the lives of stern Puritans living in Boston. It tells the story of Hester Prynne who exemplifies a strong, independent and self-confident woman. As Rahal states (2013, 39), "She is a very passionate and affectionate woman whom the heart predominates. She sinned through blind passion, and her passion and affection leads her to fall in love with the reverend Dimmesdale and commits her sin." She gives birth to a child after committing adultery. She struggles to create a new life of regret and dignity. The story takes place in a Puritan village where Hester is punished for adultery harshly. She is led from the town prison with her baby in her arms. After that punishment, there will be a scarlet cloth on her dress. It is the capital letter A. The letter "A" on her dress stands for "Adulteress". It is the symbol of her sin and shame. The public should see this letter on her breast every day and should remind her of sin. Since Hester is found guilty for her sin, she should be judged in front of the public. So, "the power of passion rejected in Hester becomes the cornerstone of the Puritan social-religious structure" (Sandeem, 1962, 432). Public humiliation is necessary for the Puritan community and Hester should confess her sin. Nevertheless, "She never feels sorry for what she had done, realizing in her heart there was nothing wrong in what she did. She is made of heroic stuff and the penance only strengthens her further" (Kilborne, 2003, 470 cited in Yahya, 2018, 58).

The narrator begins his story with the image of the rosebush beside the prison door. The rosebush symbolizes the ability of nature to endure man's activities. It is also a reminder of nature's kindness to condemned woman, Hester Prynne. In a strict Puritan society, when all the people condemn her, the season, spring is in front of the protagonist and it shows that her life will continue. After the condemnation, Hester will be formally and officially set apart from the rest of society, but she will tolerate this isolation.

Goodwives", said a hard-featured dame of fifty,
"I'll tell ye a piece of my mind. It would be greatly

for the public behoof, if we women, being of mature age and church-members in good repute, should have the handling of such malefactresses as this Hester Prynne. What think ye, gossips? If the hussy stood up for judgment before us five, that are now here in a knot together, would she come off with such a sentence as the worshipful magistrates have awarded? Marry, I trow not! (Hawthorne, 1906, 51)

As stated above, one of the Puritan women wants to punish Hester worse than the judges. To her, she and her friends are goodwives who do not commit adultery and they are more honorable than Hester. She adds that if the magistrates give Hester them, she never rescue herself from their harsh sentencing. What Hester has made is illegal to the Puritan society and since her love affair has caused an illegitimate child, this simple punishment is not enough for her sin. Actually, in a Puritan society women should be more disciplined and moral and also religious. In addition, purity and being innocent is important to the Puritan women.

“Never!” replied Hester Prynne, looking, not at Mr. Wilson, but into the deep and troubled eyes of the younger clergyman. “It is too deeply branded. Ye cannot take it off” (159). Even though the church members want Hester to give her daughter to them for bringing up her, Hester refuses it. Community officials want to take Pearl away from her mother, but by the help of her secret lover Arthur Dimmesdale, who is a minister, they manage to stay together. In the novel, the clergymen implies that if she will give her daughter to them and repent for her sin, maybe the scarlet letter will be thrown off. Nevertheless, Hester states that the badge is so powerful that no one can take it of. Again, Hester’s strength is seen here.

In this matter, Hester Prynne came to have a part to perform in the world. With her native energy of character, and rare capacity, it could not entirely cast her off, although it had set a mark upon her, more intolerable to a woman’s heart than that which branded the brow of Cain (81).

As Hawthorne states, to Hester, she has had a role in the world. She has become the representative of shame. The world has given her an unbearable shame; nevertheless she is strong enough to bear it. In these difficult situations, she should overcome the hard times of her life. She

The Role of Woman in Nathaniel Hawthorne's Novel *The Scarlet Letter* and William Faulkner's Novel *As I Lay Dying*

has committed an undeniable adultery, so she should repent and continue her life lonely. In fact, "Her suffering is not the price she has agreed to pay for her guilt but the cost she is glad to bear for her love" (Sandeem, 1962, 426).

Hester is ashamed of her sin, but she chooses to face reality rather than escape from it. In general, people may choose the way of leaving to some other places where nobody knows her sin. However, Hester is brave enough to continue to live her life, which shows her great strength and integrity (Zheng, 2017, 378)

As Zheng states above, even though the protagonist is not glad to commit sin and to witness the emergence of the concealed relationship, she decides to admit the fact and to tolerate the consequences. In normal life it is possible one to go away for living in different cities and countries. This is because; in these new places nobody can know about one's past actions. On the contrarary, Hester is a so powerful woman that she doesn't care about the people around her or consequences of the sin. She is eager to continue living in the same environment and to demonstrate the symbol of her sin.

Such helpfulness was found in her, —so much power to do, and power to sympathize, —that many people refused to interpret the scarlet A by its original signification. They said that it meant Able; so strong was Hester Prynne, with a woman's strength (Hawthorne, 1906, 152).

As seen, even the Puritan community begins to name the scarlet letter differently. In fact, it is the sign of her sin, but Hester improves a good reputation and has become more active in society. She brings food to the doors of the poor, she nurses the sick. She is the source of aid in times of trouble. She is stil frequently made an object of scorn, but most people begin to interpret the letter "A" on her chest as meaning "Able" rather than "Adulteress". This is because of the fact that "It is so artistically done that she scandalises the assembled women who comment on both her skill and Hester's ability to turn a badge of shame into a thing of beauty" (Littlefield and Sara, 2014, 2). The meaning of the letter changes for the townspeople. People are speaking about generosity of Hester's heart, her wisdom and compassion. She is not only a strong woman tolerating the previous happenings but also a charitable person.

Standing alone in the world, —alone, as to any dependence on society, and with little Pearl to be guided and protected, —alone, and hopeless of retrieving her position, even had she not scorned to consider it desirable, —she cast away the fragment of a broken chain. The world's law was no law for her mind (154).

As Hawthorne states above, like the statement above, as known, Hester is absolutely alone with Pearl in the world. Because of the fact that she has been isolated from the society, she should bring up her child without the help of anybody. The Puritan community has estranged her and she does not have any hopeful thought for her future but lives as if she ignores her position among the Puritans. To her, the Puritans' rules are wrong, but she can not change the strict rules of these people. Hester places faith and love above obedience to moral law and social custom. In addition, "Hester's decision to openly acknowledge her sin allows her to keep it from destroying her from the inside, to move on with life, to seek forgiveness, and to flourish as an "able" and caring individual in society- thereby increasing the worth of herself and her societal standing" (Mahini and Barth, 2018, 476).

The protagonist's husband, Chillingworth emphasizes her wife's strength expressing that utterance, "For, Hester, his spirit lacked the strength that could have borne up, as thine has, beneath a burden like thy scarlet letter" (Hawthorne, 1906, 161). He indicates that she is such a powerful woman that she manages to hide her real lover and accepts to bear the sin. To him, her lover is not as courageous as Hester. Being a woman in a Puritan society is not so easy and being an adulteress is so difficult that one can not visualize it. Hester is more different from other women in their village. Maybe, other women dare not to behave like her. Hester becomes true and accepts her sin freely in front of the ministers of the church. Even the sternest magistrate cannot impose her to say the name of her secret lover. As Zheng states (2017, 380), "Instead of running from the hostile colonists, Hester withstands people's insolence and pursues a normal life."

Hester names her little daughter Pearl since she is her only value and possession on the earth since in giving her existence a great law has been broken. So, Pearl is not only the sign of Hester's shame but also it is her treasure. As Thomas states (2001, 194) "Pearl embodies a major paradox: although there is perhaps no better symbol of the hope for a new beginning than the birth of a child, Hester's daughter continually reminds her mother of her

The Role of Woman in Nathaniel Hawthorne's Novel *The Scarlet Letter* and William Faulkner's Novel *As I Lay Dying*

sinful past.” She is a punishment and a solace. Both the child and the scarlet letter function as reminder of her sin.

In brief, *The Scarlet Letter* has a lasting success since it addresses spiritual and moral subjects from a different and unique point of view. When the novel is written, adultery is a risky subject in literature. However Hawthorne's support for the literature of New England, make it easy to deal with such a subject matter in his novel. Its popularity also comes from its position among the works of art, that is, it is one of the first mass produced books in America. This book represents dimension of Hawthorne's competence. In *The Scarlet Letter*, he creates so many descriptions that help us to visualize the characters, events and also the places. In that novel “Hawthorne explores the psychological effects of sin and guilt while simultaneously examining the inner struggle between good and evil through his characters” (Mahini and Barth, 2018, 474).

Nathaniel Hawthorne conveys universal themes of psychology and human nature by utilizing of allegory and symbolism. So, he is one of the most prolific symbolists in American Literature. In his novel, *The Scarlet Letter* the dialogues help the reader to understand the characters' emotions. The author explores human psychology through his exploration of the inner aspect of human consciousness. His Puritan background helps him to show a sinner in an atmosphere of Puritan community which is based on strict religious rules. “After examining this novel, it is clear that Hawthorne presents his attitude towards the rigid and the strict Puritan society; he used a lot symbols, in order to introduce his views of 42 motionless and severe Puritans in opposition to sensibility and kind-hearted nature of Hester whom, it seems, he supports” (Mohammed and Yahya, 2017, 33).

In *The Scarlet Letter*, at first the protagonist Hester is seen as an adulteress and she has to put a red letter “A” on her breast that shows that she is a sinner. Nevertheless, in time, even the Puritans begin to see the letter having the meaning of “Able” or “Angel”. So, she who is seen as a public's sinner begins to change and learns from her own sorrow to understand others who are in bad situations. On the other hand, Arthur Dimmesdale can be seen as hypocritical since he knows what the truth is, but does not show it by his actions. He has some struggles in his soul and mind, but does not want to utter his secret sin. Hester is more powerful than her lover and she manages to hide her real lover and accepts to bear the sin. Nevertheless, her lover is not as courageous as Hester. She dares to admit her sin in front of Puritan community but Dimmesdale dares not to behave like her. Thus, as Zheng states (2017, 379),

“Hester is an admirable woman who experiences more emotional torture than most people go through in a lifetime.”

As a rebel to the moral, she often thought the role of a woman in the society. She thought that the system of society must be destroyed and built again long ago, yet she seemed to be always obedient and did so many good things to help others. But under the cover of it, the pride, sneer and rebellion were hidden. She hated the letter – A, but wearing it all the time (Mohammed and Yahya, 2017, 31).

As stated in the quotation above, Hester thinks that faith and love is more significant than the Puritan laws. She is self-confident and acts independently. Actually Hester “didn’t love him at all. The old man wanted to bind this young woman to himself and the woman deceived him” (Ürkmez, 2013, 118). When one thinks about adultery in a Puritan community, he or she can say that if the intimacy and passion is forbidden, love is seen as the worst guilt of all which can be considered in the novel. However, Hester “is not presented as a helpless woman on whom an unfortunate incident has brought crushing ignominy. Quite the contrary” (Kilborne, 2005, 470). One can conclude from the novel that the most significant value among human beings is to be honest to their selves as well as to others. What make individuals real are their own realities, so they have to face with their actions and thoughts.

4. William Faulkner’s Life and Literary Works

William Faulkner is viewed as one of the most influential American writers of the twentieth century. Most of his works are set in Mississippi. He is considered as one of the most important Southern writers. He was born in New Albany, Mississippi in 1897. His actual surname is Falkner, but he changed to Faulkner. He was affected by the state of Mississippi and culture of the South.

At his early age, his family moved to town of Oxford and he lived there for the rest of his life. He joined the Canadian and the British Royal Air Force during the First World War. He studied at the University of Mississippi and worked for a New York bookstore and New Orleans newspaper. Faulkner did not have a good education but improved her knowledge by the help of reading. He lived in a small town in the poorest state and wrote a series of novels all set in the same small Southern county.

The Role of Woman in Nathaniel Hawthorne's Novel *The Scarlet Letter* and William Faulkner's Novel *As I Lay Dying*

Since he was born in South part of America, Faulkner had the advantage of describing the relationships between the blacks and whites. In addition, the life of people who are from lower classes is mostly seen in his works. In his writings there are psychological analyses and long descriptions. He tells the stories from various point of views of by varying narrators. By doing this, he demonstrates the speed of human beings' thoughts. To him, the reality can be changed by comments. In addition, the time is not steady in his works. There are usually mysterious events in the center of the stories. His most famous novels are *The Sound and Fury*, *Sanctuary*, *As I Lay Dying* and *Light in August*.

Faulkner's novel *As I Lay Dying* published in 1930. It is known for its stream of consciousness writing technique, different narrators and changing lengths of chapters. There are monologues of the tragically flawed individuals in this work. It tells the story of the death of Addie Bundren and her family quest to honor her wish to be buried in the town of Jefferson. The Bundrens live in fictional community of Yoknapatawpha County and they are the poorest characters. From the beginning to the end of the novel, Faulkner uses fifteen different points of view to build "an intricate image of Addie, her family and the community" (Noriega Sanchez, 1998, 51). In this novel, each chapter is narrated by different characters. Addie Bundren is also one of these narrators. After dying, Addie expresses her thoughts from the coffin. This chapter shows the issues of feminism and motherhood. Addie's voice is clearly expressed only after her death. Addie dislikes all her children, except for Jewel, his lover's son. The characters are developed through each other's perceptions and opinions.

Faulkner demonstrates the poverty and rural people successfully. The novel *As I Lay Dying* is about the illness, death and burial of Addie Bundren. Addie wants her family to bury her body in her home town. Struggling through flood and fire the family carries her coffin to the graveyard in Jefferson. Addie is buried next to her father. The other important woman character is Addie's daughter Dewey Dell. Dewey is raped in the cellar of a pharmacy.

Using stream of consciousness narrative technique, Faulkner explores perception and thought as the basis of experience. There are highly subjective interior monologues of different narrators. Through these fragmented passages, the story of Addie's death and transport of her body to Jefferson, is understood. The readers are forced to look at the story from a number of different perspectives that are subjective. By the way, they witness Addie's life struggle as a wife and mother.

5. The Role of Woman in *As I Lay Dying*

Faulkner's women are, for the most part, stereotypes who live in a world of their own. One feels that they are elusive because Faulkner cannot adequately describe their feelings or see them as well-rounded individuals. I will try to indicate that his women fall into two large groupings: the sexual and the asexual. This crude division is characteristic of many of our writers--Cooper, Melville, Mark Twain--who characterize men well but fail to create meaningful portraits of women (Malin, 1957, 31).

As Malin states, Faulkner creates several intensely profound female characters. He fails to construct fully rounded women in his works. Most of the women in his books are either sexually immoral, ignorant or rather earthly asexual. Their lives dictate their fate. Most of Faulkner's female characters can not be known obviously. They are usually portraits of common women. There are not detailed descriptions in her works. Faulkner can not portray the female characters adequately. However, as Qiang expresses (2016, 133), "These female figures reflect a kind of impressive and prominent feeling, the construction of this kind of feeling makes the female figures more unique and charming. It also reflects the writer's understanding of women in that social situation."

There are fifteen different narrators in the novel *As I Lay Dying*. In writing his novel with the stream of consciousness technique, Faulkner wants the readers to take an active part in constructing the story and to see the important levels of psychological insight. "*As I Lay Dying* is born out of Addie's death. A maternal corpse replaces maternal absence. Faulkner sets up two creative paradigms in the novel: mothering and speaking" (Clarke, 1994, 35). It tells the story of the death of Addie Bundren and her family's quest to bury Addie in the town of Jefferson, since it is the wish of Addie to be buried there. "In fact, language in the novel is strongly tied to maternity" (36).

Addie is the wife of Anse whom she doesn't love and they have five children. Therefore, "her married life with Anse never quenched her thirst for finding the true meaning of life. Instead, it doomed her desire to live and relish to the fullest what a life could give" (Goto, 2011, 113). She has an extramarital affair with local minister Whitfield. In fact, her third child, Jewel is Whitfield's child. So, Jewel is an illegitimate child and her mother's attitudes towards him is more different than her other children. She wants to protect Jewel and behave

The Role of Woman in Nathaniel Hawthorne's Novel *The Scarlet Letter* and William Faulkner's Novel *As I Lay Dying*

kindly. Jewel is the favourite child to her mother. Actually "Faulkner presents Addie as a woman who is driven to bitterness, despair and longing for death by the discrepancy between the reality of the situation and the expectancy of her dreams" (Mohammed and Aldouri, 2012, 11).

We see this truth by the help of a flashback spoken from the dead, Addie. The reader comprehends the reality only after she dies. Actually, Addie does not love her husband but marries him. "It was Anse or love; love or Anse: it didn't matter" (Faulkner, 1946, 464). Because of the hatred of her husband, she wants Anse to promise her that he will have her buried in Jefferson. She wishes to be buried there since she thinks that the journey to Jefferson will be long and difficult and she can revenge her hatred of her husband. Not only does she hate her husband but also her children, especially her husband's children.

In novel, Addie is mostly an absent protagonist. Her death causes to begin the novel's action. Addie Bundren has negative views on life and she blames her husband for this. In fact, she is not a maternal figure. To her, since her husband is guilty for her behaviors towards her family members, she should have an affair with another man. Her loveless life causes her to despise her husband, Anse. She gives all of her love to her illegitimate child, Jewel. She loves him more than any other person or God. To her, marital love and motherhood are empty concepts and the life is valueless. She tries to be free of her husband. She loves her aloneness and she does not want it to be violated by any one.

Another important female character in this novel is Dewey Dell, the only daughter of Addie and Anse. She becomes pregnant with the baby of Lefe MacCallum. She is afraid of an abortion and she is unable to pay for it with the ten dollars given to her by her lover. She is so overwhelmed by the anxiety for her condition that she mourns her mother's death. As Malin states (1957, 46) both Addie and her daughter "are not successful in marital relationships. Dewey Dell is unable to marry the man who fathered her child. She does not want to bear his child; she goes with her family, not really to take her mother's corpse to the cemetery, but to purchase abortive "pills" in the town's drugstore." While her family is in town, Dewey Dell tries to buy a drug that will abort her unwanted pregnancy, but the pharmacist refuses to sell it to her. The pharmacist advises marriage and she is raped in the cellar of a pharmacy.

She lived, a lonely woman, lonely with her pride,
trying to make folks believe different, hiding the
fact that they just suffered her, because she was not
cold in the coffin before they were carting her forty

miles away to bury her, flouting the will of God to do it. Refusing to let her lie in the same earth with those Bundrens (Faulkner, 1946, 353).

There is also another significant female character in the novel. She is Cora Tull being a neighbor of Addie. She is a very self-righteous woman. To Cora, the most important thing on earth is her own salvation and her Christian duty. She is very judgemental and often judges other people's actions. She is praying constantly. She asks Lord for forgiveness for her and for Addie. She can not understand Addie's belief system. Cora wants to help Addie confess her sins. In the quotation above, Cora describes her friend Addie after her death. To her, Addie is a lonely woman who tries to be understood differently by the people around her. Addie wants her body to be buried in her relatives' town, not in her husband's town. Since she is not a religious woman, she ignores the will of God. Maybe, Cora wants her to be buried in Yoknapatawpha County and she thinks that this is necessary for her salvation.

She would fix him special things to eat and hide them for him. And that may have been when I first found it out, that Addie Bundren should be hiding anything she did, who had tried to teach us that deceit was such that, in a world where it was, nothing else could be very bad or very important, not even poverty. And at times when I went in to go to bed she would be sitting in the dark by Jewel where he was asleep. And I knew that she was hating herself for that deceit and hating Jewel because she had to love him so that she had to act the deceit (429).

The second eldest son of Addie's children, Darl states that her mother makes difference between her children and her only loves and protect Jewel. As seen, Addie is not the real representative of maternity in the novel. In fact, she teaches her children not to deceive anybody in their lives since it is the worst thing in the world. Nevertheless, her words do not match her attitudes. As Petersen states (Bergman, 1996, 404 cited in 2015, 222), "Addie shows the relation to words and deeds as different for men and women, since for the latter it carries the burden of child bearing and rearing." Actually, she deceive her other children and her husband.

Because it is not us that can judge our sins or know what is sin in the Lord's eyes. She has had a hard

The Role of Woman in Nathaniel Hawthorne's Novel *The Scarlet Letter* and William Faulkner's Novel *As I Lay Dying*

life, but so does every woman. But you'd think from the way she talked that she knew more about sin and salvation than the Lord God Himself, than them who have strove and laboured with the sin in this human world. When the only sin she ever committed was being partial to Jewel that never loved her and was its own punishment, in preference to Darl that was touched by God Himself and considered queer by us mortals and that did love her. I said, "There is your sin. And your punishment too. Jewel is your punishment. But where is your salvation? And life is short enough," I said, "to win eternal grace in. And God is a jealous God. It is His to judge and to mete; not yours" (460).

Cora again introduces us Addie. She admits that Addie's life has been difficult especially because of the poverty but every woman in this town is the same. Similarly, as Goto states (2011, 113), "In this time of financial depression and in this poverty-stricken land, Addie, like other women, has no other way but to endure until her end." Since Cora is a religious woman, she indicates that Addie should not say anything about her sin, adultery. Only God knows who the sinners are and nobody has the right to judge for the sin. Addie speaks as if she knows everything about sin and salvation. Her illegitimate child, Jewel does not love her mother as she loves him. To Addie, Jewel punishes her for adultery not loving her. Cora explains that maybe Jewel is her punishment but her salvation is only the will of God. So, Addie should pray for her salvation. "According to Addie, actions are more important than their corresponding words; thus she refuses to pray for salvation with Cora" (Petersen, 2015, 229).

"Nothing", she said. "He is my cross and he will be my salvation. He will save me from the water and from the fire. Even though I have laid down my life, he will save me" (460). It is seen in the quotation that Addie does not believe in God and states that her salvation will be by the help of Jewel. Even though Jewel causes her to worry, her mother believes in him. To Addie, in every circumstance her son can save her mother since her behaviors towards him always have been different compared with her other children.

And so when Cora Tull would tell me I was not a true mother, I would think how words go straight up in a thin line, quick and harmless, and how

terribly doing goes along the earth, clinging to it, so that after a while the two lines are too far apart for the same person to straddle from one to the other; and that sin and love and fear are just sounds that people who never sinned nor loved nor feared have for what they never had and cannot have until they forget the words. Like Cora, who could never even cook (465).

By the help of the inner monologues of dead, Addie it is seen that the words are not important to her. As her neighbor states, Addie is not a true mother. “Although Addie Bundren is not the ideal person in displaying motherly care, she did refrain from departing from this world until Vardaman was old enough to take care of himself, to a certain degree” (Hauksdottir, 2017, 26). A true mother does not commit adultery or sin and is not an indifferent woman towards the members of her family. She should avoid from committing sin and should fear for what she has committed. “Unlike the other mothers, Addie did not totally accept the coming of her children and was not willing to foster them actually. She treated her child as an accident or an accidental existence” (Morris, 1989 cited in Qiang, 2016, 131). On the contrary to what Cora has said to her, Addie claims that a person who not commits sin can not understand her condition. So, Addie does not give importance to other person’s words about her life. “In fact, it is likely that her own feelings of powerlessness and resentment in that context intensify her hatred of the word since, to Addie, the word itself is a symbol of ineffectiveness” (Massey, 2003, 7).

I hid nothing. I tried to deceive no one. I would not have cared. I merely took the precautions that he thought necessary for his sake, not for my safety, but just as I wore clothes in the world’s face. And I would think then when Cora talked to me, of how the high dead words in time seemed to lose even the significance of their dead sound (Hawthorne, 1906, 465–466).

As emphasized above, to Addie, she has not deceived anybody. Even if she has deceived, it does not concern Cora. She ignores what she has done. She only focuses on hiding his lover for him. She does not fear of being known as adulteress. Therefore, again the words and gossips are not significant to her. The sin and salvation are the matter of words. Addies does not believe the

The Role of Woman in Nathaniel Hawthorne's Novel *The Scarlet Letter* and William Faulkner's Novel *As I Lay Dying*

meanings of the words. However, her neighbor believes "This world is one of cycles of death and fertility: God's curse on women" (Boudreau, 2012, 41).

My father said that the reason for living is getting ready to stay dead. I knew at last what he meant and that he could not have known what he meant himself, because a man cannot know anything about cleaning up the house afterward. And so I have cleaned my house. With Jewel--I lay by the lamp, holding up my own head, watching him cap and suture it before he breathed --the wild blood boiled away and the sound of it ceased. Then there was only the milk, warm and calm, and I lying calm in the slow silence, getting ready to clean my house (Hawthorne, 1906, 467).

In the quotation above, Addie explains the reason of her negative views towards life. Only after she marries Anse, she is able to realize what the meaning of her father utterance about life is. To her father, life means staying dead. Addie demonstrates that only a woman can understand what is to be dead in life since she should clean and arrange the things in her house and she is also responsible for lots of people in her family. Living in a farm house she should milk the cows and prepare meal for her children and husband. So, she becomes tired and do not have time to rest. That is, the society gives some roles to women so; life is so difficult for them. However, "Her attempt fails and her label as woman restrains her" (Boudreau, 2012, 50). So, as Qiang states in the novel "Addie's helplessness toward destiny and emotional distress as a southern-woman in lower-class" (2016, 129) is demonstrated obviously.

CONCLUSION

The novel, *The Scarlet Letter* presents a sad tale of love and betrayal. The values of the Puritan settlement influence the social and the gender expectations of the story. The author shows the struggle between righteousness and sin. Being a brave and strong-willed woman, Hester refuses to betray her lover, so she must face her trials alone. She wants to protect Dimmesdale and feels a debt of obligation to her husband. She knows that no one can escape the consequences of his or her earlier actions. At the end of the novel she continues to wear the scarlet letter but its meaning seems to change over time being a badge of her wisdom and insight. As seen Hawthorne's woman character, Hester is shown as rebel. She does what the other Puritan women can not do.

She is a prominent figure and possesses inner power to overcome difficulties. She has also possessed the courageousness that even a man cannot reveal, like Dimmesdale. Hawthorne shows Hester as human being able to love, to trust and to sacrifice herself. Hester accepts public punishment and resists it and the scarlet letter. She stands all the humiliations without revealing the name of her daughter's father. Maybe, the author portrays Hester as a hero. She is very dedicated and able to resist anything. She can do anything for her secret beloved. She has suffered a lot and has died at the end of the novel. Hester is an abandoned woman who stands alone but manages to continue her life lonely. She bears a lifelong mark of shame for her adultery and sees her daughter as a gift given by God. She does not see Pearl as the product of her mortal sin. Hester is the strongest character in *The Scarlet Letter*. She realizes that women can be independent and stable.

In the novel *As I Lay Dying* the most significant character is Addie Bundren who is dead. She shows the maternity in this novel. This maternity is not the usual maternity that known by everybody. It is an insensitive and a indifferent maternity. Addie does not care for anything in the world. She does not want to bring up her children from the time they born. She lives in poverty with her poor husband and with her five children. To Addie, even the religious words and their meanings are not important and if she commits sin she can also save herself by the help of her illegitimate son. She deceives not only her husband but also her children, except Jewel who is in fact the son of another man. Her marriage is loveless and she hates her husband. Since she is used to be alone in her life, when she gives birth to children her life begins to be violated. She wants to be buried in a place being away from her family. As if her children are not her own. She is aware of her sin but does not want to be forgiven by God. She thinks that Jewel will punish her for her sin; likewise Hester's thought that Pearl will be the sign of her sin.

Addie is mostly an absent character in the novel. She dies but her body is present and she affects her family members even after her death. They take a long journey to Jefferson where they will give their mother's body to earth. We not only see the motherhood but also implications of feminism and women's roles by the help of Addie's monologues. She states from her coffin that being a woman is in fact much more difficult than being a man. She interprets her father's utterance and concludes that actually a woman stay dying in the world not a man. To conclude, both in *The Scarlet Letter* and *As I Lay Dying* the writers implies the roles of woman given by the society in which she lives. Actually Hawthorne and Faulkner explain that the two female characters Hester and Addie don't act according to the roles of gender.

The Role of Woman in Nathaniel Hawthorne's Novel *The Scarlet Letter* and William
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