

Nathaniel Hawthorne: The Narrator of Science and Social Morality**Mohsen Mahmoud Rowshanzamir*****Assistant Professor of Islamic Azad University, Mashhad Branch, English
Department, Mashhad, Iran***Received 31 December 2014**Accepted 29 June 2015***1. Introduction**

In the first half of the nineteenth century, Nathaniel Hawthorne witnessed drastic and great political, economic, social, and scientific changes each of which has had some direct or indirect effects on what he was worried about. He has presented these concerns in all his works. In most of his works, he has presented some different kinds of science which have been used by some unusual scientists. Such presentations of these scientists who play important roles in his stories has been under the influence of cultural and social conditions of his time (Bloom, 1992). This article, studies Hawthorne's three short stories from social and stylistic aspects from the angles of science, mesmerism, and nineteenth century American culture.

2. Theoretical Framework**Mesmerism and Nineteenth Century America**

The popularity of mesmerism in nineteenth century America coincided with a thirst for knowledge and science in America. For the Americans, mesmerism was not only spirituality, but a sort of entertainment and business, too. Many of the experts in mesmerism used it not only to cure their patients but to entertain and attract customers, as well. Little by little some doubted about the correctness of such ways, and Hawthorne was one of them. He was interested in science and Pseudo-science and this interest led him to doubt the correctness of taking hold of some people by some others. This reminded him of slave and master relationships (Bloom, 1996).

3. Methodology

Hawthorne doubted about the correctness of such implications through portraying bad and tragic finalities for those experts in new sciences. These scientist who are void of human emotions face failure and tragic consequences. In the following, from the three short stories, some examples of such failure are presented:

* Corresponding Author: roshanzamir_mohsen@yahoo.com

1. The Birthmark

In this short story, Hawthorne presents a very famous scientist called Alymer who is an expert in all branches of science. Georgiana, his beautiful wife who should have been a cause for the scientist to leave work has changed into a thrust for more scientific work. The young woman has a birthmark on her left cheek. For Alymer that birthmark was a human fatal deformity and a sign of her probable sin, sorrow, and death. He was so proud of his skill, ignoring his wife, continues his job to her death. For Hawthorne, Georgiana was a lovely, obedient, and kind wife who spoke the oppression against women to the world through her death.

2. Rappaccini's Daughter

In this short story, the reader gets familiar with Rappaccini, a scientist with worldly desires. He wants to reach a formula to guarantee human beings against all diseases and death. His ambition is to create a generation of super human beings. He is ready to sacrifice everything, even his daughter, to reach this goal. This short story presents the American nineteenth century greed for pseudo- science. Just like *The Birthmark*, Hawthorne uses science and mesmerism not only as a theme but also as a complementary structure for his writing style. Through portraying the setting of the story in the garden, he tries to present a dream like an artificial sleep. He is criticizing the greed for science which destroys natural life and social morality.

3. Ethan Brand

Ethan has another kind of science. The science which lets him study and change human mind. He even tries to study and discover the absolute impurity and unpardonable sin (Eliot, 1991). He loses human communication. For his fellow human beings, he is not a sympathetic brother who opens the doors of the prison of sorrow to share the joy of freedom with them, but a cold-blooded viewer who regards them as laboratory creatures.

4. Conclusion

In his three short stories of *The Birthmark*, Rappaccini's daughter, and the Ethan Brand, Hawthorne presents hardships which immoral scientists bring for the humanity. He uses science and mesmerism as complementary tools for his writing style to make not only the time and place of the story, but the inner personality of his characters clear. He uses the techniques of mesmerism like constant looks, thirst for knowledge and inhuman greed to make human victims clear to his readers. He uses all these as tools to raise his voice to protest against nineteenth century American cultural and social atmosphere. He believes that science which is void of human and moral goals is destructive. For him, the new role of women, talking about pseudo- science, and ignoring morality to reach science are the important points to write about.

Key Words: American nineteenth century literature, social morality, scientist, science, Nathaniel Hawthorne.

References

- Bloom, H. (1992). *The American religion: The emergence of the post-Christian nation*. New York: Simon.
- Bradley, S. (1962)., (Ed.). *The American tradition in literature* (Vol.I) New York: W.W. Norton and Company.
- Cain, W. E. (Ed.). (1996). *Bedford cultural edition of The Blithedale Romance*. Boston: Bedford Books.
- Coale, S.C. (2003). *Mesmerism and Hawthorne: mediums of American romance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Elliott, E., et al, (Eds.). (1991). *American literature: A prentice hall anthology*. Concise ed. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice.
- Encyclopedia Britannica Online*, “Mesmer, Franz Anton” (12 November 1999). –
- Ford, B., (Ed.). *American literature*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Greven, D. (2005). *Men beyond desire: Manhood, sex, and violation in American Literature*. NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hawthorne, N. (1976). *Hawthorne’s short Stories*. New York: Alfred Knopf.
- Hawthorne, N. (1996). *The Blithedale romance*. Boston: Bedford Books.
- Stoehr, T. (1978). *Hawthorne’s mad scientists*. Connecticut: Archon Books.