



FACULTY OF ARTS
OF CHARLES UNIVERSITY
IN PRAGUE



Department of Anglophone Literatures and Cultures

**SUPERVISOR'S REPORT
B.A. THESIS**

**Violence, Guilt and Punishment in Selected Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne
Marie Gemrichová**

The thesis focuses on selected works of Nathaniel Hawthorne, namely on *Fanshawe*, *The Scarlet Letter*, and *The House of the Seven Gables*. On the background of three principal themes—of violence, guilt and punishment—Ms. Gemrichová analyses and compares several characters that appear in these texts. Her psychological analysis of characters such as Hugh Crombie and Butler from *Fanshawe*; Hester Prynne, Arthur Dimmesdale and Roger Chillingworth from *The Scarlet Letter*; and the Pyncheons and the Maules in *The House of the Seven Gables*, is fairly detailed, and the candidate supports her claims with critical material.

On the whole I find the text acceptable, although there are issues it could have addressed more carefully. To start with, the thesis could have been more precise in its theoretical exploration of the three concepts it works with. A solid attempt has undoubtedly been made in the introductory chapter, yet the definitions of violence, guilt and punishment offered there are rather raw and the links with Hawthorne's texts remain tentative. Also, while the strength of the thesis is in psychological analysis of the characters, at times the analysis is rigid, and isolated, such as in the case of Dimmesdale. The candidate could have approached Hawthorne's texts in a more general, theoretical manner. For example, instead of considering violence merely in terms of "bad" transgressing individuals, she could have seen it in a broader context, as resulting from and reproducing gender, race, class and other inequalities that are embedded in the structures of the societies that Hawthorne portrayed. Finally, there is a lot of hidden violence in Hawthorne's work, e.g. in *The House of the Seven Gables*, given the centrality of the "lost Indian deed" for the Pyncheons. In this context, would Ms. Gemrichová agree with the critic who argued that "the 'lost Indian deed,' hidden away in the dusty inner recesses of *The House of the Seven Gables*, embodies the multicultural unconscious of Hawthorne's literary text"? Is there ethnically and racially motivated violence detectable in this text and/or in other works of Hawthorne?

Proposed Grade: **velmi dobře (very good) or výborně (excellent)**

Pavla Veselá, PhD.
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