

# Transcultural Mobilities and Memories

EDITORS / ORGANIZADORES:

MÁRIO MATOS / JOANNE PAISANA

## Mobilidades e Memórias Transculturais

hhuus



Universidade do Minho  
Centro de Estudos Humanísticos

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Editors / Organizadores: Mário Matos e Joanne Paisana

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End. Postal: Apartado 7081

4764-908 Ribeirão – V.N. Famalicão

Tel. 926 375 305

E-mail: [humus@humus.com.pt](mailto:humus@humus.com.pt)

[www.edicoeshumus.pt](http://www.edicoeshumus.pt)

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# New “Old” woman-as-witch

INÊS TADEU FG

## Introduction

The remembering of painful pasts is not confined to those who have directly experienced them. It has secondary, intergenerational consequences and often unfolds diachronically, geographically, and beyond different cultures. It is an active and creative process of ongoing (re)construction and (re)arrangement between memory and imagination, individually and collectively. (Keightley and Pickering 25) Remembering assures the dissemination and reception of a particular painful past's transcultural, cultural, and counter-memory. (Law 8-10) Case in point, the Salem witchcraft trials, which took place in 1692 in New England, have been reconstructed through this process of mnemonic imagination in the medium of literature. For the purpose of this paper, our *corpus* includes a selection of works of nineteenth-century Romantic historical fiction, such as *Salem: A Tale of the Seventeenth Century* (1874) by D. R. Castleton, *South Meadows* (1874) by Ella Taylor Disosway, *Martha Corey: A Tale of the Salem Witchcraft* (1890) by Constance Goddard Du Bois, and *Dorothy, the Puritan: The Story of a Strange Delusion* (1893) by Augusta Campbell.

In these novels, the 'old' demonic witch is (re)created as a new Romantic witch-heroine. However, one cannot forget that the demonic witch of Salem was,

in turn, a (re)creation of the English demonic witch. The transcultural memory of the latter constructed the cultural memory of the former. Therefore, we must first briefly explain what constituted a demonic witch in seventeenth-century England.

### The *Old England Demonic Woman -as-Witch*

The cumulative, heterogeneous transcultural memory of what constitutes a witch has been a trying argument to settle. Here, we refer solely to the demonic witch as systematised by Julian Goodare<sup>1</sup>. Besides engaging in *malleficium*<sup>2</sup>, the demonic witch is a “malevolent intermediary” who enters in a compact with the Devil, becoming part of a heretical sect. (Newall and Briggs x) With diabolism,<sup>3</sup> the main concern was the assault on Christianity led by the Devil and his “collective of apostates”, the demonic witches. (Johnstone 12-13) The demonic witch became frequently portrayed in seventeenth-century English pamphlets as a mostly, but not exclusively, diabolical female co-conspirator, labouring together with her peers as part of a hierarchical, heretical society of servants to the Devil, their godlike leader. (Millar 2017 147-148, 174)

However, the Devil was believed to be unable to command people. So, the demonic witch willingly relinquishing her free will in favour of his sect, renouncing Christianity and electing to worship the Devil instead, made her inversionary behaviour<sup>4</sup> an unprecedented act of apostasy and heresy. (Quaife 22) As an apostate, the demonic witch’s crime is no longer one of manipulating preternatural<sup>5</sup> powers such as metamorphisation, transvection, spectral projection or

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- 1 See Julian Goodare, (2016). Similarly, Millar refers to “diabolic witchcraft” (Millar 2017) and Jensen uses the term “heretic witch.” (Jensen 2007)
  - 2 *Malleficium*, the manipulation of preternatural powers with malicious intent, was the most elementary form of witchcraft. (Wilby 44-45) However, in his *A Discourse of the Damned Art* (1608), the English demonologist William Perkins adds three other forms of *malleficia*. First, juggling, which was fashioning alterations or illusions. Second, divining as in revealing events from the past, present, or future. And lastly, enchanting or the use of spells. (Carlson 40)
  - 3 For more on *malleficium* and its relationship to diabolism, particularly in a European context, see, for example, Brian Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, 3rd ed. Harlow: Longman, 2006. For witchcraft in England as primarily malefic rather than diabolic, see this same text.
  - 4 Stuart Clark in his *Thinking with Demons – The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (1997) discusses the early modern view of female witches as women who were prone to transgress by engaging in inversionary forms of behaviour.
  - 5 Witchcraft, ghosts, and the power of the devil constituted the *preternatural*. This category related to what occurred beyond the normal bounds of nature and ranged from the activity of the devil

keeping familiars<sup>6</sup>. Her crime is now one of ultimate treachery.<sup>7</sup> (Willis 15) What is more, since "the witch was your spouse, your clergyman, your teacher, your doctor, your cousin the nun, or even your child", the demonic witch endangered far beyond her community, threatening the whole of Christianity. (Wilby 46-45; Davidson 58-60)

This pivotal and undisputed belief in the existence of the demonic witch and the perils of diabolism was prevalent in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English Puritan demonology. The seventeenth-century English migration of large groups of members of the Puritan faith to New England<sup>8</sup> facilitated the propagation of the (trans)cultural memory of preternatural wonders such as demonic witches. (Gasser 100-103) In addition, in the twilight years of the seventeenth century, the New England village of Salem would seemingly fall prey to the same Devil and his witches.

## The New England Demonic Woman -as-Witch

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himself and the demonic dealings of magical agents such as witches to the activities of all spiritual agents other than God and his immediate servants: the angels, the disembodied souls of the dead, and demons. However, since the nineteenth century, the use of the word *supernatural* relating to the divine has fallen into disuse, and most contemporary readers understand this term as signifying beings other than God. See Francis Young, *English Catholics and the Supernatural, 1553-1829*, 23-26.

6 Familiars were demons, namely *incubi* and *succubae*, in the shape of animals.

7 The idea of diabolic pact as heresy and apostasy was not contemplated in the English Witchcraft Acts of 1542 and 1563. It only entered the English secular witch trials in the seventeenth century. (Jones and Zell 63) The diabolic pact in the Act of 1604 became politicized as a crime of apostasy and rebellion. At the same time, this transition might have made the witch seem less like Satan's master and more his servant – a reversal of roles which, it has been suggested, signified a reassertion of patriarchal hierarchy through demonology and the law. Furthermore, the literal demonization of witchcraft was carried to its logical conclusion after the start of the Civil War, with its apocalyptic overtones and godly claims to spiritual warfare on the Parliamentary side. (Rowlands 2009, 181)

8 On the migration to New England see, for example, Stephen Foster, *Their Solitary Way: The Puritan Social Ethic in the First Century of Settlement in New England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971); David Cressy, *Coming Over: Migration and Communication between England and New England in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *New England's Generation: The Great Migration and the Formation of Society and Culture in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991); and Alison Games, *Migration and the Origins of the English Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

Around mid-January 1692, in the Salem Village<sup>9</sup> parsonage, the home of Reverend Samuel Parris,<sup>10</sup> his nine-year-old daughter Elizabeth (Betty) began to exhibit symptoms of a severe illness. Before long, Betty's eleven-year-old orphaned cousin Abigail Williams, who also lived at the parsonage, presented similar symptoms. (Mixon 33-35). Minister Parris consulted with nearby ministers who advised him to follow Cotton Mather's procedure in the Goodwin case<sup>11</sup> and "sit still and wait upon the Providence of God, to see what time might discover." (Hale 25)

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- 9 In the winter of 1691-1692, Salem Village was a thinly populated rural area adjacent to the coastal town of Salem. Land grants in the mid to late 1630s helped populate the area later named as Salem Village which was located north and west of the town centre. Salem Town, the first permanent settlement in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, was founded in 1626. During the 1630s, immigrants flowed in and moved five to ten miles inland to "the Farms." Once established by the 1660s, the villagers petitioned for permission to build their own meeting house and hire a minister. In 1672, Salem Village was allowed to establish a parish. Between 1672 and 1689 Ministers James Bayley, George Burroughs and Deodat Lawson were appointed and dismissed. In November 1691 the village was torn apart by the controversy regarding the new Minister Parris' salary. In addition to the conflicts within the village and between the Village and the Town, there was the issue of the church membership backsliding, the constant threat of the Indians and the French to the north. In early 1692, Abenaki Indians had attacked the settlements in Maine reminiscent of the King Philip's War of mid 1670s. Also, in 1684 the colony had lost its self-governing charter and the Crown appointed a new governor in 1686, Sir Edmund Andros. With the excuse of the "Glorious Revolution" back in England, Massachusetts revolted against Andros in 1689 and set up its own commonwealth based on the old charter, while they anticipated for Reverend Increase Mather's return from England with a new charter. (Robinson et al. xi-xv)
- 10 Though born in England Minister Parris was raised in Barbados. In the early 1670s he attended Harvard but before completing his studies he returned to Barbados to settle his late father's estate. Having failed to establish himself as a merchant both in Barbados and in Boston, he sought ordination. In 1689, after prolonged negotiations, Minister Parris accepted a call to Salem Village where he was forced to incessantly haggle for his salary, the provision of firewood, and the transfer of land for a parsonage. (Parris et al. 3-4) By late 1691, the congregation was dissatisfied with Parris's ministry thus refusing to contribute to his salary or to supply him with firewood and asked for his dismissal. Due to an abnormally cold winter Parris' firewood supply became scarce. Though he expected and pressured the congregation for additional wood to be brought forth, most Salem villagers believed he should plan for his own wood. (Norton 16-18) For more about Samuel Parris see Larry Gragg, *A Quest for Security: The Life of Samuel Parris, 1653-1720* (1990), *The Sermon Notebook of Samuel Parris 1689-1694*, (1993), and Marilynne K. Roach, "Records of the Rev. Samuel Parris Salem Village, Massachusetts, 1688-1689", (2003), 6-30. Samuel Parris was portrayed in nineteenth-century scholarship, led by Charles Wentworth Upham's seminal work, as the major villain of the Salem witch hunt. (Rosenthal et al. 17)
- 11 Cotton Mather's experience with the afflicted Martha Goodwin, who spent five or six months in his home, provided him an alleged close encounter with evil spirits. As a result, he authored his first publication titled *Memorable Providences, Relating to Witchcraft and Possessions* (1689), which became a seminal demonological work in New England. The work appeared in a second edition in

Though Minister Parris sent his daughter Betty away from all the turmoil to haste recovery, he endeavoured to display the other afflicted girls to the community. He procured the neighbouring ministers' help with prayers in their congregations. Minister Paris called on William Griggs, the local physician, for medical advice by the middle of February. He pronounced they were caught by the "evil hand." Before long, the matter was taken out of Parris's hands when the afflicted started naming their tormentors. (Ray 48, Klaitz 120) The girls' afflictions, however, intensified. Reverend John Hale, from the nearby village of Beverly, who examined the girls, noted

[t]hese children were bitten and pinched by invisible agents; their arms, necks, and backs turned this way and that way, and returned back again, so as it was impossible for them to do of themselves, and beyond the power of any epileptic fits, or natural disease to effect. Sometimes they were taken dumb, their mouths stopped, their throats choked, their limbs wracked and tormented so as might move a heart of stone, to sympathise with them, with bowels of compassion for them [and] pins [were] invisibly stuck into their flesh, [as if] pricking with irons. (Hale 24)

The first to become afflicted outside of the Salem Village parsonage were next-door neighbours of the Parris family. Ann Putnam Jr., the twelve-year-old daughter of Thomas Putnam Jr. and his wife, Ann Putnam senior, were members of one of the leading families of the village. (Baker 101- 103, 132; Robinson et al. xv)

Elizabeth Parris, Abigail Williams, and Ann Putnam Jr., pressured by the Salem magistrates Jonathan Corwin and John Hathorne, accused Tituba, Sarah Good and Sarah Osbourne of bewitching them. Tituba was a domestic servant in Reverend Samuel Parris' household, most likely a captive from South America, and married to a man referred to as Indian John or John Indian. Sarah Good was a destitute woman, ill-famed for her volatile temperament and her tendency to mutter menacingly. Sarah Osbourne was a land-owning woman often involved in lawsuits and relatively uninhibited in nature. At the beginning of March of 1692, all three women were interrogated by magistrates Corwin and Hathorne. While Sarah Osbourne and Sarah Good maintained their innocence, Tituba offered the Salem magistrates a thorough confession on being a demonic witch and assisted the court in uncovering other local demonic witches.<sup>12</sup> (Mixon 37)

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1691 and a third edition in Edinburgh in 1697. The London edition contained a recommendation by Richard Baxter. (Silverman 87)

12 To read Tituba's statements in full see Rosenthal's *Records of The Salem Witch Trials* (2014), 133-136. Her recorded statements are dated 1st and 2nd March 1692. In them, she elaborated on a

Soon, Ann Putnam Jr.'s seventeen-year-old step-cousin, Mary Walcott, the daughter of Captain Jonathan Walcott, the leader of the Salem Village militia, also became afflicted. By the sixteenth of March, three more girls were tormented. Elizabeth (Betty) Hubbard, William Griggs' niece; Mary Warren and Mercy Lewis, who worked as servants to John and Elizabeth Proctor and the Putnams.<sup>13</sup> (Baker 101- 103, 132; Robinson et al. xv) Along with Susannah Sheldon, these girls spawned most of the witchcraft accusations,<sup>14</sup> or rather accusations that people were tormenting them in spectral form. (Klairs 120, Baker 101-103, 132; Robinson et al. xv)

The preliminary witchcraft hearings began in Salem in March. In the absence of the newly appointed royal Massachusetts Bay Colony Governor

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diabolical conspiracy in Massachusetts covering all the likely seventeenth-century English and Puritan witchcraft beliefs, for example, the Devil as a black man, the animal familiars, flying to the sabbath and covenanting with the Devil by signing his black book in blood. (Breslaw xix, xxii-xxiii; Burns 25) Prior to Tituba's confession, witchcraft cases in New England had proceeded in a variety of ways, with nearly everyone denying the charges. The accused sometimes counter sued for slander to force the dropping of their complaint. Some were simply held in custody for a time with or without a trial, and finally released on bond for good behaviour. A few were tried and found not guilty, while others were convicted and executed, although in some cases, the convicted were spared by judicial intervention. The few who confessed did not appear to do so during interrogation, but at arraignment when entering a plea, hoping for mercy. However, those who did so were still executed. (Burns 25) It is also significant that many of Tituba's renderings were repeated in most of the subsequent confessions. Goody Putnam became the first to follow Tituba in describing the devil's book. The afflicted later referred repeatedly to being tempted to write their names in Satan's book, while confessors typically described having done so. Several women who incriminated themselves by confessing to diabolism during the Salem outbreak later retracted their statements. They contended that they had been intimidated into confessing and that the religious and secular authorities listened to what they chose to hear. (Karlson 11-12, 13) Prior to Tituba, Elizabeth Knapp was the first to refer to the diabolic covenant represented in a book. Samuel Willard's account of her afflictions is found in Increase Mather's *Remarkable Providences* published in 1684. (Norton 52) Though indicted, Tituba was never brought to trial and was held in the Salem Town jail for twenty-two months, longer than any other accused witch. In December 1693, Tituba was purchased by the individual who paid her jail fees. (Ray 43)

- 13 Older girls and teenagers carried out vital household chores assisting the female heads of their families, namely their mother, their mistress or their relative. Their constant fits upset the daily household routines and their labour became either unreliable or unavailable. Also, the young women atypically became the centre of the household around which all its other members revolved, even though the girls in their roles as daughters, nieces, or servants enjoyed a menial station in the familial hierarchy. (Norton 51-52)
- 14 A total of nineteen afflicted can be identified in legal complaints, in indictments, and involved in the legal proceedings.

William Phips,<sup>15</sup> Massachusetts Lieutenant Governor William Stoughton presided over the examinations while closely counselled by Minister Cotton Mather, the spokesperson for the Boston ministers.<sup>16</sup> Stoughton, assisted by several other magistrates, such as Justice Hathorne and Justice Corwin, continued executing arrests and carrying out examinations through May without the possibility of indictments and grand juries<sup>17</sup>.

When confronted with the accused during the proceedings, the afflicted would often go into violent convulsions, providing a graphic testimony of their torments. (Klaits 123-124) Besides the blurring between presumption and proof, the visions of spectres – perceptible only to the accusers – were admitted as spectral (substantiating) evidence.<sup>18</sup> (Rosenthal et al. 18-19, M. Gaskill 195)

When Governor William Phips returned in June, the jails were full of accused men and women awaiting trial.<sup>19</sup> He thus appointed a Court of Oyer

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- 15 When the initial witchcraft charges emerged, the Massachusetts colony had been without a governor and a governing charter for three years, in the aftermath of England's Glorious Revolution. The thirty- one-year- old Sir William Phips, a ship captain and military leader who had been born in Maine, was making his way to New England with the new charter when the Salem magistrates conducted their first preliminary hearings. Once in Boston, Phips briefly looked into the charges of witchcraft but left instead to Maine, to fight off the Native Americans during the summer of 1692. (Klaits 123-124)
- 16 The Court's Chief Magistrate was Massachusetts Lieutenant Governor William Stoughton. Stephen Sewall was the clerk and Thomas Newton the prosecutor. Jonathan Corwin, Bartholomew Gedney, John Hathorne, Increase Mather, John Richard, Nathaniel Saltonstall, William Sargeant, Samuel Sewall and Wait Winthrop were among other members of the commission. (Starkey, 1963; Boyer and Nissenbaum, 1974).
- 17 The proper pattern of complaint, arrest, warrant, examination, imprisonment, grand jury hearing, and trial was disrupted. (Rosenthal et al. 18-19) Normally, the grand jury stage which followed the examination, did not take place for three months. The interim governor, Simon Bradstreet, would not permit the examinations to proceed to indictments preventing the witchcraft cases from advancing to a grand jury and, ultimately, to a trial. (Ray 67-69)
- 18 In seventeenth-century New England, felony capital offenses such as the crime of witchcraft followed the three phases of the English common law practice. First, the complaints, arrest warrants, and preliminary hearings or examinations. If the examination bore incriminatory evidence, the accused was jailed and held for a formal indictment and a grand jury hearing, or jury of inquest, which could acquit the defendant or sustain the indictment. If the indictment was upheld becoming a true bill, the proceedings moved to the decisive stage the jury trial. The jury would convict or acquit the defendant. A conviction meant execution by short drop hanging. (Ray 67-69) William Stoughton ruled spectral evidence as acceptable, though it had not previously been allowed in New England witchcraft trials and was largely criticised by authorities on the subject. (Bremer 30-32; Rumsey 45-46)
- 19 Instead of remaining a localised witchcraft outbreak, by the end of May 1692 the afflicted accused an ever-growing number of tormentors from beyond Salem Village. Indeed, most of the people tried and executed were neither from Salem Village nor from Salem Town but from the neighbouring

and Terminer in Salem Town to preside over the indictments, trials and penalties. (Mixon 33-35) In the aftermath of the first executions in June and July, the number of accused continued to surge. By the end of the summer of 1692, Governor Phips' wife was accused of being a witch. After that, he forbade any further arrests and released many of the accused in jail. (Blumberg, 2007)

Following Reverend Increase Mather's publication of a demonological treatise refuting spectral evidence,<sup>20</sup> Governor Phips dissolved the Court of Oyer and Terminer on the twenty-ninth of October due to the resulting mounting scepticism and feeling of unrest. (Reed 211-212) The trials resumed in January 1693 under the Superior Court of Judicature. It excluded spectral evidence and condemned only three of the fifty-six defendants who had spent a bitter winter in prison. Governor Phips met the convictions of the Superior Court of Judicature with clemencies. By May of 1693, he exonerated all those charged with the crime of witchcraft and still in prison, entirely dismissing Chief Justice Stoughton's standing.<sup>21</sup> (Gaskill 197, Mixon 38) The last trials took place two weeks later.

All in all, between January 1692 and May 1693, approximately a hundred and eighty-three men and women in Massachusetts were charged with the crime of witchcraft.<sup>22</sup> Of the accused, a hundred and fourteen men, women, and children were arrested and imprisoned for months on end. Another forty-three people were tried, of which twenty-seven were convicted and sentenced to death.

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villages of Andover, Charlestown, Marblehead, Lynn, Reading Topsfield, Salisbury, Billerica, Gloucester, Malden, Beverly and Ipswich. (Trask ix; Rumsey 45-46) The Ipswich prison had been previously available to the Salem court. However, the population increase in that region warranted another prison in the town of Salem itself. Accordingly, in 1668 a prison was placed in the centre of the old town, near the first meetinghouse. Later, a more secure prison was built in 1684. It was that prison that housed so many of the accused who were crammed into a small space awaiting trial on charges of witchcraft in the summer of 1692. (Powers 216)

- 20 In his *Cases of Conscience Concerning Evil Spirits Personating Men, Witchcrafts, Infallible Proofs of Guilt in such as are accused with that Crime* (1693), Increase Mather opposed the substantiating use of spectral evidence since based on it, innocent people could be charged and found guilty.
- 21 On July thirty first 1693, the council read a letter from Queen Mary endorsing Governor Phips's performance. At this time, the Salem witch-hunt had been halted for over ten weeks. (Gaskill 197, Mixon 38-39)
- 22 The Witchcraft Act of 1604 came into effect within a year of James I's accession to the throne of England. Harsher than previous versions, it made causing harm while resorting to magic—*maleficium*—even if it did not result in or lead to death, a capital crime. It also decreed death for anyone found guilty of committing for a second time a punishable offense using magic. It also proscribed the use of dead bodies in magic or the keeping, as opposed to the conjuration, of spirits. In effect, it made it much simpler to convict anyone suspected of witchcraft, as the burden of proof was much reduced. See C. L'Estrange Ewen, ed., *Witch Hunting and Witch Trials: The Indictments for Witchcraft from the Records of 1373 Assizes Held for the Home Circuit AD 1559-1736*. (1929), 19-21.

Nineteen people were hung by short drop. An older man, Giles Corey, was pressed to death with stones for refusing to enter a plea. Eight people died in prison, including two nursing infants of the jailed women and a little girl. Six of the condemned were reprieved, whereas sixteen others who had the financial means and could count on the help of family relatives of good social standing managed to escape prison entirely. Forty-six confessed to being witches, and two people were found innocent but were forced into indentured servitude as they could not pay their jail fees.

### **(Re)created Journeys: The *new* Romantic woman-as-witch heroine**

Early on, Governor Phips restricted the publication of any official accounts about the Salem witch hunt; it was quickly memorialised in non-fiction.<sup>23</sup> Reassembled chiefly through memory and imagination, the "mythology that [would] constitute the history of the Salem Witchcraft trials" became part of the cultural counter-memory of this moment of the early modern American past. (Rodríguez 3)

By the nineteenth century, the Salem witch hunt of 1692 had become an often (re)created, (re)imagined, (re)memorised American literary *leitmotif*, for the most part in historical fiction.<sup>24</sup> Several lesser-known American women writers would use the Salem witch hunt as a significant plot element in their works of Romantic historical fiction, as in the instances we are succinctly considering next. In *Salem: A Tale of the Seventeenth Century* (1874) by D.R. Castleton, we travel with Alice Campbell and her grandmother, Mistress Elsie Campbell, from Scotland to Hill Side Farm in Salem in 1679. Later in 1692, Alice's grandmother is accused of witchcraft for her close friendship with Rebecca Nurse, one

23 See, for example, Cotton Mather, *Wonders of the Invisible World* (1693); Deodat Lawson, *A Brief and True Narrative* (1692) Robert Calef, *More Wonders of the Invisible World* (1700); John Hale, *A Modest Enquiry into the Nature of Witchcraft* (1697); Daniel Neal, *The History of New England* (1720); Thomas Hutchinson, *The History of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts* (1767); George Bancroft, *History of the United States* (1834); Charles Wentworth Upham, *History of the United States* (1867).

24 Since historical fiction is mnemonic and mimetic, as a medial for presenting a reimagined past, it facilitates cultural memory not only by memorializing but also by acting as counter-memory. As argued by Mitchell and Parsons, "in this way, the novel both offers itself as a witness to, or commemoration of, the [historical event] and its victims, including the survivors, and dramatizes the process by which memory is transmitted; the events are made memorable by the affective evocation of unrepresentable suffering and the numberless dead." See Kate Mitchell and Nicola Parsons, eds., *Reading Historical Fiction: The Revenant and Remembered Past* (2013), 10–11.

of the women hanged as a witch in Salem, and whose ordeal is painstakingly shared with the reader. Mistress Campbell, the grandmother, who spoke with a thick Scottish accent and was “well-skilled in all the homely curative lore”, was arrested. (Castleton 271) She “had been cried out upon by the accusing girls – the constables had come with a warrant that morning and taken her away to jail, to be tried as a witch, like poor Goody Nurse! [A]nd she was condemned and sentenced to death.” (Castleton 274, 291) Mistress Campbell does, however, escape the noose for Alice

in one moment she had quitted the cart to which she had convulsively clung, and with one wild bound, like the death-leap of some maddened creature, she sprung directly in Sir William’s path, and flinging up her wild arms to arrest him, she raised her sad, beseeching eyes to his, and faltered out her impassioned appeal: ‘Mercy! mercy! your Excellency; pardon – pardon for the sweet love of heaven – she is innocent! Oh! as you hope for mercy in your own sorest need hereafter, have mercy upon us mercy! Mercy!’ (Castleton 310)

Alice’s altruistic fearlessness was rewarded. Mistress Campbell was reprieved. In addition, one of the officers in the governor’s company turned out to be Alice’s long lost Cavalier father. Now in the company of her father and Mistress Campbell, Alice crosses the Atlantic once again, this time headed to England.

With the exception of some of the characters, such as Rebecca Nurse, or the circumstances in which the accusations are put forward by the afflicted girls, little else is constricted by historical accuracy, and no open references to diabolism are made. Indeed, both Mistress Campbell and Alice are the heroines of the whole affair which they survive, almost unscathed, and triumphant.

In *South Meadows* (1874) by E.T. Disosway, we read Allison Beresford’s story in her younger sister Ida’s journal. The orphaned girls arrive in Boston harbour in “one pleasant evening in June” on board the ship *St. George*. They are taken in by their uncle Ebenezer Fairfax – the only surviving blood relative on their mother’s side – and his wife Martha and daughter Ruth, in his farm in Salem known as the “South Meadows”. Soon, a young, well-to-do man, Master Campbell, shows romantic interest in Allison instead of reciprocating her cousin Ruth’s feelings for him. When the Salem witch hunt breaks out, their cousin Ruth also becomes afflicted and Allison is accused of being the witch who is tormenting her.

Cousin Ruth is bewitched. I [Ida] doubt no longer that an evil spirit has her fast in his toils. When I was summoned to the kitchen, I found her lying on the floor, a most dismal spectacle.

Her whole frame was gathered, shivering and writhing, in a heap; her eyes rolled piteously, and turned in their sockets until the whites only could be seen.; and ever and anon she gasped out as if choking for breath.

'Pins are being thrust and through and through my heart. Then for five minutes she spoke no more, but her shivering and shuddering continued until she called out again in great agony: 'They are in my tongue – scorching, red hot pins and needles! Oh! oh! How fiercely they burn! Take them out! Help! help! Father, mother, take them out!'

She hung out her tongue like a thirsty animal, but refused water when they brought it to her. As I looked, I doubted no longer in witchery, but I noted with a shudder that whenever Allison approached her, the pains and convulsions increased. (Disosway 186-187)

Before long, Allison is accused of being the witch who is tormenting her cousin Ruth.

Ruth accuses my sister Allison of tormenting her by devices obtained from Satan. Day and night her pain and anguish of mind and body are unceasing; she tastes no food, save a few spoonfuls of brandy, and sleep will not visit her eyelids.

She shrieks at the mention of our Creator's name. When uncle Ebenezer prays by her side, she foams at the mouth, her eyes roll in their sockets, her teeth chatter, and her whole frame is convulsed with paroxysms of agony, with shakings and shudderings, and her symptoms increased when my uncle held the Holy Scriptures before her [...] Cotton Mather and his associates, misguided men they be, come to-morrow to accuse and try you for the crime of bewitching my Cousin Ruth. (Disosway 192, 197)

Though Allison is convicted and executed, she first makes sure that her sister Ida is led safely away from Salem. Though Disosway allows her woman-as-witch to perish, Allison is still delivered. She assures her younger sister's survival. She dies innocent. The author makes it quite clear that Allison is wrongly convicted by the Puritan magistrates and ministers. By implication, neither her, the Romantic witch-heroine, nor the executed demonic witches of Salem, were thus guilty of any crime, let alone the one of witchcraft.

In Constance G. Du Bois' *Martha Corey: A Tale of the Salem Witchcraft* (1890), we rejoice at first with Lady Beatrice Desmond, who is engaged to be married to Charles Beverly and very much in love with him. However, her cousin Captain Percy Desmond is determined to have her for his wife instead.

To break up the couple, he reveals to her, on her wedding day, that Charles had been having an affair with a married woman, neglecting to add that the relationship had recently come to an end. Broken-hearted, instead of falling into Captain Desmond's arms, Beatrice undertakes a voyage to New England, where she assumes a new name and is eventually taken in by Martha and Giles Corey. Captain Desmond tracks her down and follows her to Salem.

Failing to win her affection yet again, out of revenge, he plots with minister Parris her demise, as well as Martha Corey's, who stoically had stood by and had protected Beatrice from Captain Desmond by confronting him: "I [Captain Desmond] will give you [Minister Parris] double the amount in our agreement if you contrive that Martha Corey and Beatrice Desmond shall be cast in to prison as witches." (Du Bois 256)

As a result, both women are soon accused of witchcraft and arrested. First Martha Corey: "I hear,' says Elder Brown, 'that Goody Corey is accused of witchcraft.' [...] Ann Putnam has seen her spectre,' said Goodman Crosby. 'When asked to describe her clothes, she said she could not see, her eyes were blinded; but her face was plain enough.'" (Du Bois 261)

And then Beatrice was arrested: "The warrant that was prepared for the arrest of Beatrice Desmond, companion and friend of the witch Goody Corey [...] I [Minister Parris] find there is no doubt that she was drawn by Goody Corey into this evil compact." (Du Bois 285) But Charles Beverly swoops in and rescues Beatrice from jail.

Beverly threw himself on his knees at her [Lady Phips] feet, seized her hands, and looked imploringly into her face. [...] You know her [Beatrice] innocence of all guilt, you abhor the infamous injustice which is at the bottom of these arrests, and I know you long to right the cruel wrong. You cannot single-handed conquer the delusion, but you can save one life. [...] She went to her desk, and wrote [...] 'Let the prisoner, Beatrice Desmond [...] falsely accused of witchcraft, be immediately set free upon my order. (Du Bois 305-306)

Charles and Beatrice make their way back to their former life in England, as happy newlyweds, while Martha Corey stays behind and embraces her fate self-sacrificingly: "Do not cry out against what must be. I will remain and suffer what is laid upon me. I rejoice in Beatrice's deliverance." (Du Bois 310)

Again, Martha Corey, another one of the executed witches of Salem, is not spared. Nevertheless, similarly to Castleton and Disosway, Du Bois does redeem her witch-heroine, Beatrice, and further strengthens the counter-memorialisation of the innocent women-as-witches of Salem.

In *Dorothy the Puritan: The Story of a Strange Delusion* (1893) by Augusta C. Watson, we follow seventeen-year-old Dorothy Grey, her aunt Martha Holden and her uncle David Holden, pious Puritans who find a haven in Salem, away from religious persecution. There, Dorothy grew up lacking in piety but was very free-spirited and harboured an unsettling longing to return to "merry old" England. She often neglects her religious obligations as she enjoys wandering off into the forest and spending countless idle hours immersed in nature, and taking pleasure in solitude. In one of her exploits into the forest, Dorothy meets a handsome English gentleman, Sir Grenville, who seduces her and fills her head with promises of fun and fortune back in London. Though the aspiring young Minister Wentworth is courting her, she foolishly accepts to elope with Grenville. However, he does not show up. Desponded, she unexpectedly finds shelter and solace with Goody Truman, an older woman living alone with her pets deep in the woods. After spending the winter there, having her heart nursed back to health, she ends up becoming Mrs Wentworth, the minister's wife. Years later, she is accused of witchcraft by a resentful former friend, Elizabeth Hubbard, now one of the "wretched circle" of afflicted girls. (Watson 271) Elizabeth had long voiced her misgivings about Dorothy.

I do not think she hath been taken by the Indians. She has been—in my poor knowledge I say this—bewitched by the black man, and is perchance e'en now concocting evil schemes against us. She ever loved to be alone; he has taken her unawares. [...] She was never God-fearing, so it was not for prayer and meditation. She hath been taken unawares, I repeat, and been forced to sign her soul away. Satan hath claimed her for his own. (Watson 124-125)

But this time, she confronted Dorothy publicly in the town square.

'We are bewitched,' she shrieked, as she writhed upon the ground, 'we are bewitched! The woman who doeth us this harm is standing in the crowd. 'Where, where?' called a chorus of voices. 'There she stands,' cried Elizabeth, rising to her feet and pointing toward Dorothy. Her face was pale, her eyes bloodshot, her whole bearing instinct with a frenzy approaching madness. 'I scarce dare look upon her—there, with the old woman by her side. She is the queen of the witches; they do her bidding night and day. I do denounce thee, Dorothy Wentworth, I, Elizabeth Hubbard, the inspired. (Watson 266)

Dorothy narrowly escapes being hung with the help of her husband. They leave Salem, only to return eight years after the end of the witch hunt. Watson opts for focusing on one of the afflicted, namely Elizabeth Hubbard, rather than

on any of the executed women, tacitly underscoring their wickedness by comparison to the accused. Again, Dorothy, the witch-heroine, remains unblemished. In the eyes of the reader, she is deserving of her escape from execution. So were all.

## Final Thoughts

Firstly, we argue that Castleton, Disosway, Du Bois and Watson's work exemplify the inescapable transatlantic and transcultural journey of the cultural memory of the woman-as-witch, all the way from seventeenth-century England to nineteenth-century New England.

Bound to this same seventeenth-century Salem, the (re)memorialised destination, the woman-as-witch, was recreated as a Romantic witch-heroine. Nineteenth-century Romantic witch heroines Alice Campbell and her grandmother Mistress Campbell, Allison Beresford, Beatrice Desmond, and Dorothy Grey overcame their witchcraft tribulations. They further avoid the deadly ending of their seventeenth-century real-life counterparts because of some form or another of the same inversionary behaviour that got them into trouble in the first place. Furthermore, employing their creative acts of memory, the authors counter-memorialise and redeem the memory of the 'old' woman-as-witch of the Salem witch hunt of 1692.

Lastly, the Salem witch hunt came to epitomise the 'old' woman-as-witch subjugation by the colonial Puritan patriarchal *status quo*. By examining it, we find that Castleton, Disosway, Du Bois and Watson facilitated the recreation of the cultural counter-memory of the Salem witch hunt. It became a cathartic cautionary tale.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, we find an "uncanny doubling between female protagonist and female reader who recognises her own vulnerability, lack of agency, and powerlessness in society," and who is made more motivated to endeavour in countering that inflicted powerlessness. (Palumbo-Desimone 397-398) Like a counter-magic spell, these instances of Romantic historical fiction conjure up the Salem witch hunt of 1692 to disenfranchise the 'old' witch's spectre and summon a new 'old' woman-as-witch in its place.

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25 For more on how the Salem witchcraft trials became an inescapable portion of the cultural memory of the American colonial past but as a cautionary tale see Gretchen Adams, *The Specter of Salem: Remembering the Witch Trials in Nineteenth-Century America*. (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

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