

# UNIVERSIDAD DE ALMERÍA

Facultad de Humanidades



GRADO EN ESTUDIOS INGLESES

Curso Académico: 2015-2016

Convocatoria (Junio/Septiembre): Septiembre

Título del Trabajo Fin de Grado: Classical Tradition and reception of the myth of Pandora in the *Paradise of children*, by Nathaniel Hawthorne.

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## 1. Introduction, methodology and main goals.

This paper deals with the appropriation and original adaptation of the ancient Greek myth of Pandora by Nathaniel Hawthorne, a North American writer who decided to adapt Ancient Greek mythology to children.

As a student of English Studies, I am interested in literature written in English as well as in the modern receptions of ancient Greek mythology in English speaking countries. Since I studied “Greek for English Studies” during the third year of my Degree, I became interested in the ancient Greek legacy and its receptions in English language and culture. As such, this paper aims to focus on the classical tradition and reception of a very famous ancient Greek myth in particular: the myth of Pandora.

For the analysis of Nathaniel Hawthorne's short story, *The paradise of children* I will follow the methodologies of two different, but closely related schools of thought: Classical Tradition Studies together with Reception Studies. According to Michael Silk, Ingo Gildenhard and Rosemary Barrow (2014: 3):

*The classical tradition covers a millenium and a half of culture achievements, historical developments, facts, fictions, and phenomena on many levels. It subsumes the many ways in which, since the end of classical antiquity, the well of ancient Greece and Rome has inspired and influenced, has been constructed and reconstructed, has left innumerable traces (sometimes unregarded), and has, repeatedly, been appealed to, uncontested, as a point of reference, and reused and reconstituted (with or without direct reference) as an archetype.*

From a classical tradition perspective, ancient Greek writers and artists are fundamental sources of inspiration and influence. They were the forerunners of this tradition and created a legacy, a heritage to which all later writers and artists all over the world would be indebted. Conversely, Reception Studies focus not only on ancient sources but also and specifically on the way ancient material is received. According to Lorna Hardwick (2003: 4), “*because reception is concerned with the relationship between ancient and modern texts and contexts, as well as with those separated by time within antiquity, it has implications for the critical analysis of both.*” Moreover, Reception Studies pay attention to “*both commonalities and differences between ancient and modern*” (Hardwick 2003: 11). Accordingly, Classical Studies and Reception Studies complement each other.<sup>1</sup>

The main aims of this essay are:

1. To compare and contrast the different versions of the ancient Greek myth of Pandora, specifically through the main literary examples used by the first versions in ancient Greek

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<sup>1</sup>See Budelmann 2008: 14, 16-19 as well as Silk, Gildenhard and Barrow 2014: 4-6.

- (Hesiod) and Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The paradise of children*;
2. a critical analysis of Nathaniel Hawthorne's appropriation of the ancient Greek myth of Pandora and his particular adaptation of this myth for children;
  3. the literary techniques employed by the author in order to display his knowledge of the ancient Greek myth as well as to convey his particular vision of it;
  4. an interpretive analysis of different the layers of meaning involved in Nathaniel Hawthorne's short story.

## **1. Introducción, metodología y objetivos principales.**

Este trabajo aborda la apropiación y adaptación original del antiguo mito griego de Pandora por Nathaniel Hawthorne, escritor norteamericano que decidió adaptar la antigua mitología griega para un público infantil.

Como estudiante de *Estudios Ingleses*, estoy interesada en la literatura escrita en inglés, así como en las recepciones modernas en los países de habla inglesa de la antigua mitología griega. Desde que estudié “*Griego para Estudios Ingleses*” en el tercer año de mi carrera, me interesé en el legado griego antiguo y su recepción en el idioma inglés y su cultura. Por lo tanto, este trabajo pretende centrarse en la tradición clásica y la recepción de un mito griego antiguo muy famoso y específico: el mito de Pandora.

Para el análisis del cuento de Nathaniel Hawthorne “*El paraíso de los niños*” voy a seguir la metodología de dos diferentes pero muy relacionadas escuelas de pensamiento: los Estudios de la Tradición Clásica junto con Estudios de Recepción. Según Michael Silk, Ingo Gildenhard y Rosemary Barrow (2014:3):

*La tradición clásica abarca un milenio y medio de los logros de la cultura, progresos históricos, hechos, ficciones y fenómenos a muchos niveles. Incluye las muchas maneras en las que, desde el final de la antigüedad clásica, las fuentes de la antigua Grecia y Roma han inspirado y han influenciado, han sido construidas y reconstruidas, ha dejado innumerables huellas (a veces desatendidas) y, repetidamente, han sido reclamadas, sin oposición, como un punto de referencia y reutilizadas y reconstituidas (con o sin referencia directa) como un arquetipo.*

Desde una percepción de Tradición Clásica, los escritores de la Grecia antigua y los artistas son las fuentes fundamentales de inspiración e influencia. Fueron los precursores y transmitieron un legado, una herencia con la que todos los posteriores escritores y artistas de todo el mundo estarían en deuda. Por el contrario, los Estudios de Recepción se centran no sólo en las fuentes antiguas sino también y específicamente en el modo en el que el material antiguo se recibe. Según Lorna

Hardwick (2003:4), “*porque la recepción se refiere a la relación entre contextos y textos antiguos y modernos, así como entre aquellos separados en el tiempo dentro de la antigüedad, ésta tiene implicaciones para el análisis crítico de ambos*”. Por otra parte, los Estudios de Recepción prestan atención a las “*similitudes y diferencias entre lo antiguo y lo moderno*” (Hardwick 2003:11). En consecuencia, los Estudios de Tradición Clásica y los Estudios de Recepción se complementan el uno al otro.

Los principales objetivos de este ensayo son:

1. Comparar y contrastar las diferentes versiones del mito antiguo de Pandora, concretamente a través de los muchos ejemplos literarios usados de las primeras versiones en la Grecia antigua (Hesíodo) y “*El paraíso de los niños*” de Nathaniel Hawthorne;
2. un análisis crítico de la apropiación de Nathaniel Hawthorne del mito antiguo de Pandora y su particular adaptación de este mito para niños;
3. las técnicas literarias empleadas por el autor para demostrar su conocimiento sobre el mito antiguo así como para transmitir su particular visión de este;
4. un análisis interpretativo de las principales capas de significado involucradas en el relato de Nathaniel Hawthorne.

## **2. Hesiod and the first literary versions of the myth of Pandora.**

The first versions we find about the myth of Pandora were told by the ancient Greek poet Hesiod in antiquity. He was a native of Boeotia (ca. 775-660 BCE) and he wrote about the myth of Pandora in *Theogony* and *Works and Days*, both of which were composed around 700 BCE and have been completely preserved to the present day. On the one hand, we find that, in the former, he initiates the telling of the first Greek theological myths as well as dealing with themes such as the creation of the world, the origins of the gods, titans and giants along with some other popular tales. On the other hand, in the latter, he tells the myths of Prometheus, Pandora as well as the myth of the Five Ages (Grafton & Settis 2010: 435). In both poems, he tells the story of the famous myth of Pandora and he explains the factors causing a series of events to unfold which led to a terrible ending for the mortal beings who inhabited the Earth. These myths exemplify the fall of man from a privileged position to the current situation, as a result of Prometheus’ challenge against Zeus.

In *Theogony*, Hesiod narrates the misfortunes that befell Prometheus, a demigod who was considered the creator of the human race (only men existed at that time). He was the son of Iapetus and the nymph Clymene and he was a titan. In this poem, Zeus, god of the gods of Olympus, is

tricked by Prometheus<sup>2</sup>.

Regarding Hesiod's versions, the whole thing around Prometheus begins because, during the sacrifice of an ox, Prometheus offered Zeus to choose one of the two parts that he had previously separated, maliciously putting in one of them only bones wrapped in white fat to simulate that it was the most succulent part while he hid the edible part, i.e. the skin, all the meat and viscera, in the ox's belly. Zeus, being fully aware of what is happening, chooses the part containing the bones and, enraged, he decides to take revenge on all men on Earth by denying them the use of fire. However, Prometheus does not take this lying down and he now feels resentment for what the god has done to mortals. Knowing that all fire emanates from the Mount Olympus where the gods are, goes there and sets a dry branch on fire and he returns to Earth to give it to the humans. Zeus becomes infuriated again for that new sin committed by the cautious Prometheus and he decides to chain him, first to a column and then to the Caucasus mountain, as a punishment for what he has done. He makes a hungry eagle devour his immortal liver during the day making him writhe in terrible pain and only to be regenerated during the night so that his suffering would continue the next day. Hesiod exemplifies this perfectly when he says: "*And ready-witted Prometheus he [Zeus] bound with inextricable bonds, cruel chains, and drove a shaft through his middle, and set on him a long-winged eagle, which used to eat his immortal liver; but by night the liver grew as much again everyway as the long-winged bird devoured in the whole day.*" (Hesiod Th. 521-525)

Prometheus endured this punishment for thirty years but he was saved by Hercules, a son of Zeus. Nevertheless, as a consequence of this second sin committed by the wily Prometheus, Zeus imposed another punishment upon men and he gave Hephaestus the job of creating a woman of stunning beauty who would bring forth misfortunes to Prometheus and the humans. The woman was modelled with earth and water, and once the statue was finished, she came to life. Once alive, all the gods of Olympus gave her their best gifts. Aphrodite gave her beauty, grace and elegance. Hermes gave her the gift of cunning, and a haunting mind and voice. Athena lavished her with a beautiful dress, crowned her with a garland and taught her to be skilful with her hands. Thus, the first woman was created and her name was Pandora. This name has been interpreted in many ways by several authors. It could mean 'full of gifts' or 'the gift of everyone' because *pan-* means 'everything' and *-dora* comes from the Greek word *δῶρον* 'gift'. All the gods admired Pandora, and so did all mortal men. Pandora will become the mother of all women, the first woman on Earth with whom mortal men would fall irresistibly in love. (Pérez Jiménez 1978: 161).

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<sup>2</sup> Prometheus was considered the protector of human civilization. He was very cunning and he taught everything he knew to the humans. He was in favour of the mortals so he wanted to mislead Zeus to see the gods humiliated in some way.

In his later poem, *Works and Days*, the version that Hesiod tells about the myth is quite similar to the one already told in *Theogony*. He complements it by adding more details and things that he did not mention in the previous one. This version narrates the story of Prometheus and his theft of the fire from the gods. Hesiod narrates similarly on how Zeus plans to take revenge in order to punish Prometheus for playing such a dirty trick on him. Zeus then decides to create a woman, ordering Hephaestus to create a goddess-like maiden figure helped by other deities. Epimetheus will accept the present the gods give him albeit unaware that she will be the one who spreads all the diseases and bad things that inhabit the Earth nowadays. Pandora will be sent to the mortals and will also be the one who lifts the lid off the jar that contains all the evils of the Earth sent by Zeus (except for *Hope* which remains inside of it), thus forcing man to work and suffer for eternity.

*Theogony* and *Works and Days* are very similar in content but they do not mention the same things since there are some subtle differences. The thing is that, in spite of this, we are not able to get rid of any of the poems because both complement each other perfectly and if we omit one of them then some relevant information would be missed. The characters that Hesiod mentions in both poems also play an important role. We can see that he uses more or less the same characters in both stories, some of them being more relevant than others. We find plenty of characters and there is a mixture of gods and mortals.<sup>3</sup> One of the most important characters is Zeus, who was also known as Jupiter or Jove (Iovis) in Roman mythology. He was the Supreme God of Greece and the only one that had indisputable power above all others. He was the son of two Titans, Cronus and Rhea, brother of Hera, Poseidon and grandson of Uranus. All the laws in the world were created by him. He punishes Prometheus several times for his imprudence in challenging him. The first time Zeus did this, was when he tried to trick him during the sacrifice of an ox. Prometheus misled Zeus making him infuriated: “*So spoke Zeus in anger, whose wisdom is everlasting; and from that time he was always mindful of the trick, and would not give the power of unwearying fire to the Melian race of mortal men who live on the earth.*” (Hesiod, *Theogony* 561-564). The second time Zeus punished him was because he denied the use of fire to the mortals and Prometheus broke the law that Zeus had imposed. Unsurprisingly, the god got angry again and he said: “*Son of Iapetos, surpassing all in cunning, you are glad that you have outwitted me and stolen fire-a great plague to you yourself and to men that shall be. But I will give men as the price for fire an evil thing in which they may all be glad of heart while they embrace their own destruction.*” (Hesiod, *Works and Days* 54-58).

Prometheus is the other character who has a great relevance in the story for his authorship in

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<sup>3</sup> All the relevant information about the descriptions and biographies of the characters in Hesiod's poems was taken from <http://greekgodsandgoddesses.net/gods/> and <http://www.theoi.com> [03/03/2016]

the theft of fire from the gods and for misleading Zeus. The name of Prometheus comes from Greek Προμηθεύς, Προμηθέας stemming from the prefix προ- (*pro-* meaning 'before') and -μητις (*-metis* meaning 'thought'). As the man who introduced fire and was the inventor of the sacrifice, Prometheus is considered the protector of human civilization. He was the son of the Titan Iapetus and Clymene, one of the Oceanids, as well as being Menoetius', Atlas', and Epimetheus' brother. He is introduced through the account of his tricks against the gods, in particular against Zeus, among which are included those of the ruse of the ox, mentioned above, or the theft of fire from the gods to give it to the mortals. He, who is particularly astute, will become the advocate of mortals and at the same time he will be the one who brings about what was considered the creation of the first woman on Earth (Pandora). The theft of fire sees him chained to a pillar and tortured by an eagle which eats his immortal liver as a punishment for challenging the gods.

Epimetheus is also mentioned in both poems by Hesiod. He was Prometheus' brother and his name also originates from Greek Ἐπιμηθεύς (literally meaning 'afterthinker') from ἐπί- (*epi-* meaning 'after') and -μητις (*-metis* meaning 'thought'). He was also a titan and together with his brother, they were responsible for populating the Earth. This character, in contrast to his brother, was not so cunning and cautious, which brought terrible consequences for all humankind. He accepted the gift from Zeus (Pandora), sparking off the catastrophe by scattering all the diseases from the jar she carried.

Hesiod also mentions several Greek gods who played an important role because they were in charge of helping in the creation of Pandora. Every deity donates a gift to her to create the “perfect woman.” The gods and goddesses that took part in her creation were Aphrodite, the goddess of beauty and love; Athena, the goddess of wise counsel, war and weaving; Hermes who was the god of heralds (he was the messenger of the gods) and of roads, travel, language, trade, trickery etc.; and finally, Hesiod also uses the figures of the Graces (or *Charites*) who were the goddesses of charm, beauty, human creativity and fertility as well as Persuasion (also known as *Peitho*) who was the goddess of persuasion and seduction. However, Hephaestus (Vulcan or Mulciber according to Roman mythology) was a god of vital importance here since he was the creator of Pandora's figure at the request of Zeus. He was the god of fire, metalworking and the art of sculpture. As a result, he was the only one who could carry out a task like this.

There are other characters in the poem that Hesiod uses to give us a wide view of Prometheus ancestors and family but they do not participate in the story as prominently as the others.

Last but not least, the character of Pandora played a vital role in the story because she was the first woman created by the gods. Before her there were no women on earth and feminine things



did not exist until she came. She was endowed with beauty and cunning among other things. She was delivered to Epimetheus, who after that took her as a bride and her daughter Pyrrha was the first-born mortal child and the only one who then brought more female descendants through her marriage with Deukalion.

Throughout the depiction of the characters in the poems, and, above all, the character of Pandora, ever controversial, the myth of Pandora has been observed by many authors from different points of view (in the sense that the myth has been subjected to multiple interpretations). To justify Hesiod's mind and what he wrote in these two poems, it is essential to understand the social background of the author, but the problem is that there is little information about Hesiod's life. He was a farmer and he came from a humble family, devoting his adolescence and youth to agriculture and shepherding, the profession of his father. Such is the case, that we can deduce that he did not have an easy life. It is for that reason, that the author has reflected this in many of the themes he uses in his works. The vision that he has about women in both poems is very pessimistic and misogynist, although there are other interpretations apart from these. Hesiod holds a misogynist point of view in the poem because he sees women, and in this case Pandora, as the cause of all evil on earth. The image he gives us is that of a pessimistic vision of the figure of Pandora since she carries along with her a jar which contains evil and disease in the form of a plague sent by Zeus.

Jean-Pierre Vernant, a French philosopher and historian, has written about several interpretations of the poems (Vernant 2000: 71-78). Firstly, he gives us an anthropological vision of the myth. He says that now that Pandora has been created as the first woman, humanity can comprise two sexes: male and female. The masculine gender already existed before her arrival but the female did not. The only thing they understood as feminine was only based on the image of the goddesses. She is now the only woman among a society which is primarily a patriarchal society ruled by men. From now on, women will also be necessary for human reproduction. Men will no longer be born through spontaneous creation as the involvement of women will become necessary for their creation as well as the creation of more women from that moment onward.

Vernant also says that women had a double role. On the one hand, they were the belly that devoured all the benefits that their husbands had earned through hard work and fatigue but, on the other hand, this belly was the only one able to prolong the life on earth, unique in being able to create a new life. Although women have now this wonderful ability of conceiving children, ironically, only the negative aspects of being with a woman or getting married are highlighted. Hesiod gave more importance to the fact that they devoured all the things their husbands brought home than to their ability to conceive life inside their bellies.

The situation begins to change and the Greeks will come to see Pandora not only as the one

who brings along with her the evils that the jar contains (except Hope which is good) but also as being the responsible for the life for men which will no longer be as before. She actually brings a “wicked” jar that symbolises the accumulation of goods, which in this case are not actually goods but evils. As a consequence, her arrival will involve more sacrifice for men and they will have to perform all those tasks that were previously done by the gods. From an agricultural point of view, men no longer had access to the resources of nature as before: how and when they want. They had to work hard to earn a living. It was in earlier times, such as the Golden Age, when men lived happy and carefree as they had nothing to do, not even to worry about the food they were going to eat since the Earth gave it to them willingly. This is something that was triggered by the theft of fire by Prometheus who, by this act, limited the use of these resources for humans. Men would have to work hard to earn profits at harvest and in addition, they needed to keep part of that so as not to spend more than necessary. From this point of view, we can see that the figure of Pandora, just like the rest of women originating from her, shares the feeling of being “unsatisfied” because she always wants to feel “satiated and abundant” (Vernant 2000: 75). The woman will always be seen in this way because she will come to the world as a nonconformist being; she always wants more than she has.

Vernant compares this situation to a colony of bees. While the worker bees are away from the hive from the very beginning of the morning collecting nectar from the flowers, the drones, which are always in the hive, are the ones using all the nectar that the other bees have been putting there patiently. According to Vernant, the same happens with men and women at home. Men are those who work in the field and when they get home, women are those who devour all the harvest. This comparison with the bees is used by Hesiod in the *Theogony* when he says:

*As the bees in their sheltered nests feed the drones, those conspirators in badness, and while they busy themselves all day and every day till sundown making the white honeycomb, the drones stay inside in the sheltered cells and pile the toil of others into their own bellies, even so as a bane for mortal men has high-thundering Zeus created 'women, conspirators in causing difficulty. (Hesiod Theogony 594-600)*

The woman is therefore considered as a belly, which is equipped with a great “greed, animality and a large sexual appetite” (Vernant 2000: 77). Women's longing for food ruins the health of their husbands. Vernant subsequently talks about two ways of living. On the one hand, if a man chooses to marry to a woman, his life will probably be hell (due to the difficulty of finding an exceptional woman at that time) and, on the other hand, if the man does not get married to any woman, he will have a happy life and live in the lap of luxury, although when he dies his heritage will possibly only be left for a distant relative or maybe for nobody at all. Hesiod also exemplifies

this in the *Theogony*:

*And he gave a second bane to set against a blessing for the man who, to avoid marriage and the trouble women cause, chooses not to wed, and arrives at grim old age lacking anyone to look after him. He is not short of livelihood while he lives, but when he dies, distant relatives share out his living. Then again, the man who does partake of marriage, and gets a good wife who is sound and sensible, spends his life with bad competing constantly against good; while the man who gets the awful kind lives with unrelenting pain in heart and spirit, and it is an ill without a cure. (Hesiod Theogony 603-607)*

We can also consider the poem from an erotic point of view. Pandora is received by men as the first woman on earth created in the image of the immortal goddesses. She is likely to be seen as a partner, but not in the figure of a girlfriend as we understand the term nowadays but as a bride. Greeks imagined her as a bride bringing with her a dowry, which in this case, is the jar that Pandora carries along with her. This jar was also a symbol of women and their reproductive ability but in this case it was full of evils so it cast a negative light on women when it was opened by Pandora. According to Vernant's interpretation, "the marriage distinguishes men from the beasts that mate of any which way." (Vernant 2000: 78). As such, we can say that marriage may be seen as the only way of human beings continuing on earth thanks to the birth of new children. However, on the contrary, if a man got married, catastrophe could break out.

From a ritual and religious vision of the poems, Hesiod explains throughout the myth of Pandora and Prometheus how the first human beings on earth left the life plenty of material things and food they were living until that moment and they fell out of favour being punished by gods to live a miserable existence. The incident mentioned by Hesiod in *Theogony* was the one involving the sacrifice of an ox in Mekone<sup>4</sup>: "*For when the gods and mortal men had a dispute at Mekone, even then Prometheus was forward to cut up a great ox and set portions before them, trying to befool the mind of Zeus.*" (Hesiod Theogony 535-537). The sacrifice of an ox celebrated by gods at a banquet was a turning point in the relation between gods and men. We can see that from now on, there is a clear distinction between them. The relationship they have now is very far from the one they had before. consequently, a critical question need to be asked here: did the mortals respect them simply for the fact that they were gods or because they feared to be punished by them if they disobeyed the laws?

There are other feminist critics that also talk about this in relation with the different interpretations of the myth. They stand up for the same ideas that Vernant previously wrote about. Mary R. Lefkowitz talked about misogyny in Hesiod, saying that women brought trouble to

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<sup>4</sup> The incident mentioned here goes back to the time when mortals lived happily on earth and they did not have to worry about anything. This time was known in literature as the Golden Age, considered to be a good time for men, but it changed after the sacrifice of the ox because of Prometheus' trick on Zeus that resulted in the separation of gods from humans.

mankind but not because of their sexuality, but due to the fact that they were considered bitches (not in the way we know the term, but in the way the Greeks interpreted it; they understood it as female dogs which were “*shameless, amoral, without judgement.*”) (Lefkowitz 2007: 170). She backs up the idea based on the pessimistic vision about women at that time with the arrival of Pandora as the cause of all this mess. What she says about women is that “*their desirability itself is not the only problem; the real trouble is caused by the presence in women of evil intent, which emerges later as openly destructive behaviour; she releases diseases upon the world, she consumes a man's livelihood.*” (Lefkowitz 2007: 171). Hence, she sums up Hesiod’s idea about it being women’s fault for bringing the evils into the world that still exist today.

Another feminist author, Lilian E. Doherty, talks about all these ideas from a structuralist and post-structuralist approach in her book entitled *Gender and the Interpretation of Classical Myth*. The figure of Pandora, the first woman on earth, was created as a beautiful woman to attract Epimetheus’ attention. Nevertheless, she hides a ‘bitchlike’ and ‘thieving’ nature and she brings with her a jar which contains all the evils (including “*diseases, old age and death*”). (Doherty 2003: 134). As a result, she is going to be seen as guilty of releasing all these evils into the world. From now on, the life of men will change. Before the incident with the jar, men obtained their food directly from nature and they used fire freely from gods. However, they now had to work hard to preserve and reproduce them. They had to be cautious in reproducing the seeds they needed to eat, but they also needed to reproduce themselves by “*planting their ‘seed’ in the ‘bellies’ of women.*” (Doherty 2003: 135). Doherty also mentions Vernant’s distinction between gods and mortals. He shows us that worldly institutions like marriage, sacrifices and agriculture placed men midway between beasts and gods. He deals with this idea in tandem with the fact that men, like animals, must kill, eat and procreate to survive. Nonetheless, they had to bear in mind that all the actions they took were under the gaze of gods and they could not just kill all the living creatures they wanted, or eat any kind of food, or have sexual relationships with whomever, as they were being placed under some limits. On the other hand, she also considers Pandora as the “*perfect symbol of human condition*” because she is a combination of three elements such as the charm of her physical appearance, the bitchiness of her temperament and the articulated word, all of them given by the gods. These three factors allowed her to be in a perfect union with the three statuses of the world, i.e. the divine, the bestial and the human one. To end up with this, she says that, as a result, it is remarkable that Hesiod considers the woman the mother of all the ‘race of women’ and not the mother of all humans in general but she is seen from a ‘destructive’ point of view.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Doherty specifies here that the opposition between men and women in Vernant’s analysis about this issue is not something he has himself imposed. Thus, he does not judge it and leaves it to be analysed by the feminist scholars.

### 3. Classical traditions and reception of the myth of Pandora in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The paradise of children*.

Pandora, the first woman according to Greek mythology, is among the most significant characters in ancient literature. To many scholars, the later reception of this character does not correspond to the relevance which the classical authors, especially the Greeks, gave her. In spite of that, Hesiod's versions all had something in common: Zeus created a "false gift" for the humans as a punishment for the theft of fire by Prometheus. The myth of Pandora has been retold by many writers since Hesiod transmitted it for the first time in his two works *Theogony* and *Works and Days*. However, apart from the original myth, we find many other representations of the figure of Pandora after this period in fields such as painting and poetry.

Véronique Gély (Brunel 1998: 1501-1506) talks about the different "Pandoras" that developed from the original one. She appears in paintings such as the one by Gabriel Dante Rossetti; she is represented in the face of Louise Brooks in the film by Pabst, Ava Gardner in Lewin's *Pandora* or even in comics or detective stories. She even represents the image of the modern renowned *femmes fatales* nowadays.

Gély says that Pandora "reappears at the beginning of the Christian era in the funerary art and in the neoplatonic philosophy." (Brunel 1998: 1501). Later, some details were added to Hesiod's version. Among many important works in which the figure of Pandora appeared, we find the *Bibliotheca* written by Apollodorus, around the I century A.D., which was a compendium of myths and heroic legends, or the Hyginus' fable.

Plotinus, a Greek author from the III century A.D., was the one who gives us the idea that Pandora could have been created by Prometheus, but we do not know if this creature was Pandora or Psique, a Greek divinity. We do even not know who gave life to her: Prometheus or Athena. Around the I century, Babrius, who rewrites the myth from a Fable by Aesop, says that it was the man, and not Pandora, who opened the jar and that inside it there were only good things and not diseases. Pandora has been placed under the sign of the misunderstanding because she is the reminder of the Greek marriage (represented in the jar and also in the figure of Hermes, the herald of the gods) and she also may had to think that the union formed by Pandora and Epimetheus in the myth is predestined to fail and would only mean the sexual union between them and not any other kind of social link.

In the XVI century, there is a significant change regarding one important element of the myth as we' knew it. The Renaissance scholar Erasmus of Rotterdam (1508) probably confused

Pandora's jar (in Greek *pithos*) with another very similar word referred to as a box (*pyxis*), which appeared in an episode from the *Golden Ass* by Apuleius, in which Psyche opens a box against the orders of Cupid. Accordingly, from this point on, the myth is referred to as *Pandora's Box* and not *Pandora's Jar* (Dougherty 2006: 41).

Other subsequent authors have associated Pandora's image to the parallel figure of Eve and original sin (IV century C.E.). Among these were Gregory of Nacianzus, Origen and the humanist Henri Estienne, who took up this parallel in his work *Conformité des marvellaux anciennes avec les modernes* (1556) and who compared Pandora to Eve and Prometheus to Adan. Another important scholar was Milton, who also establishes this link between the characters in two of his famous works such as *The Doctrine of Discipline and Divorce* (II, 3) and in *Paradise Lost* (IV, 708- 719).

There are more cases of paintings rather than poetry in which we can appreciate the recognition of these figures. In paintings such as the one called *Eva prima Pandora* by Jean Cousin (around 1549) we can find the image of a female character lying down with the branch of an apple tree over a skull in her right hand and she has got a snake holding open the cover of a jar around her left hand. From 1651 to 1657, Baltasar Gracián published his three part work *Criticón*, an allegorical novel in which Pandora "breaks a prohibition because of her curious lightness" (Brunel 1998: 1503). Pandora has also been compared to Mary Magdalene because the box has sometimes been confused with the perfum bottle that the latter carried. As such, in Porphyry's allegorical reading, Pandora appears to be depicted as guilty and tempting at the same time.

She was the personification of *Pleasure*. Gabriel Dante Rossetti painted her in 1871, representing Pandora as a *femme fatale*. He later inspired other authors such as Swinburne. He saw Pandora and her box as the representation of sin, the sin of flesh given by the goddess Aphrodite.

Voltaire wrote a "philosophical opera" in 1740 (adapted in 1767 by Delaborde) and he wanted to show "the origin of the moral evil and the physical evil" (Brunel 1998: 1504). Pandora here does not share the guilt of Eve. Love is what saves her. Her name is also used in a laudatory way when Edmund Spencer calls Queen Isabel "the true Pandora of all heavenly graces." It is also used in an engraving from an author who represents Christina, Queen of Sweden (Brunel 1998: 1504). All the gifts attributed to Pandora were thus joined together in an allegorical tradition. According to Plutarch, Pandora's gifts constituted richness, marriage and statuses but, regarding the late neoplatonic theories, she was "the origin of the arts and the civilization of customs" because of her feminine nature. (Brunel 1998: 1505).

Calderón's *La estatua de Prometeo* and Goethe's fragments from *Prometheus* (1763), were two important plays. In the first one, Calderón describes Pandora as "the responsible of the propagation of the arts and sciencies among men" (Brunel 1998: 1505) and she takes on the

appearance of the goddess Athena. In the second play, Prometheus dedicates a passionate hymn to Pandora's figure which he has sculpted. For Goethe, Pandora would mean the “transcendental happiness.” (Brunel 1998: 1505).

**a) Nathaniel Hawthorne: biography and cultural context.**

Nathaniel Hawthorne was an American novelist and short-story writer. He was a very influential writer of the nineteenth century and everything that we know about him, including his life and the works that he wrote, as well as the cultural context at that time, has been studied in depth by many critics and other scholars, among who we can find for example are the famous theorist Harold Bloom (2007: 1-2), as well as Leland S. Person (2007: 1-15) and Richard H. Millington (2004: 14-18).

About Hawthorne's life we know that he was born on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 1804 in Salem (Massachusetts). He was the son of Nathaniel Hathorne<sup>6</sup>, a sea-captain, and Elizabeth Manning Hathorne. He became fatherless when he was only four because his father died of yellow fever in Suriname (New Guinea). At this time, after his father's death, he was raised by the Mannings (his mother's family) together with his two sisters, Elizabeth (1802-83) and Louisa (1808-52). In 1819, his mother and sisters moved to Raymond (Maine) but he stayed in Salem with his uncle's family.

When he was seventeen, in 1821, he entered Bowdoin College (Maine). Here, he became friends with many of his classmates who would be part of his life in the future. Among them were Horatio Brigde, Jonathan Cilley, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and Franklin Pierce, the latter possibly being his closest friend since they would spend a lot of time together. He started to write some poems and stories here and his poem “The Ocean” (1825) and the tale “The Hollow of the Three Hills” (1830) were published in the *Salem Gazette*. In spite of the fact that he was not a good student and that he was once caught playing cards at college, he finally graduated in 1825.

Three years later, in 1828, he anonymously published his novel called *Fanshawe: A Tale*, a novel based on his experience at college. It was self-financed but he later burnt the unsold copies when he saw that it was going unnoticed by the public. In 1836, he worked as editor in *The American Magazine of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge*. A year later, he published the collection of stories named *Twice-Told Tales*. Unable to survive with the income from his jobs, he started to work at the Boston Customs House until January 1841. The same year, he joined the communal society of Brook Farm, near Boston, hoping to find the economic stability that would allow him to

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<sup>6</sup> His son would later add the “w” to his surname becoming Hawthorne instead of Hathorne as his father's surname was.

marry and at the same time dedicate himself to literature. Alas, as he could not find time to write there, he gave it up.

In 1842, he married Sophia Amelia Peabody, from Salem, and the couple settled in Concord (Massachusetts) in a house called Old Manse. During the time they lived in “Old Manse”, many of his neighbours were the well known transcendentalist authors, among whom were Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Margaret Fuller, and Ellery Channing. He wrote many tales and sketches, including “The Birth-Mark,” “Rappaccini’s Daughter,” “The Artist of the Beautiful,” and “The Celestial Rail-road,” later collected in *Mosses from an Old Manse*. In 1844, his first daughter Una (the first of three children) was born. Two years later, he published the afore mentioned collection of stories and sketches and worked as a surveyor at the Salem Customs House while his second child Julian was born and a year later, in 1850, he wrote and published his most important and famous work named *The Scarlet Letter*. This novel was set in seventeenth century in Boston and is a story about an adulterous Puritan, Hester Prynne, who, showing signs of great loyalty, refuses to reveal the name of her lover. Considered as his masterpiece, and one of the classics of North American literature, it highlights both the narrative mastery of its author and its psychological depth when he comes to describe the feelings of guilt that are created in human beings and the anguish that it causes in them. Hawthorne then moves to a farm near Lenox, Massachusetts, where he lived until the following year and where he enjoyed the friendship of one of his admirers, the novelist Herman Melville.

*The House of the Seven Gables* was written a year later and it was also a puritan work; it was a romance that also examined the Puritan culture. The birth of his third child, Rose, was also in this year. He also published *The Snow-Image and Other Twice Told Tales*, which was a collection of stories including “The Great Stone Face” or “Ethan Brand” among others, as well as *A Wonder Book for Girls and Boys*, which was a retelling of Greek myths written for children.

In 1853, he continued publishing works such as *The Blithedale Romance*, a novel inspired by his stay at Brook Farm. He also put together the biography of Franklin Pierce, one of the friends he made when he was at college and who would later become the fourteenth President of the United States. As a reward for doing this work for him, he worked as American consul in Liverpool. Another collection of stories, *Tanglewoods Tales*, was published at the same time, another retelling of more Greek myths written for children.

From 1857 to 1859, he lived with his family in different places such as Italy, Rome and Florence and his last published novel, *The Marble Faun*, was written in 1860, after which he returned to Concord, Massachusetts, to live with his family. The last work published by this author when he was still alive was named *Our Old Home* (1863). A year later, his health was rapidly



deteriorating and he died during a trip with his friend Franklin Pierce in Plymouth (New Hampshire) and was buried in Concord, Massachusetts. There were also four posthumous works that survive today which are *Septimius Felton* (1872), *The Dolliver Romance* (1876), *Dr Grimshawe's Secret* (1882) and *The Ancestral Footstep* (1883).

According to Charles Chadwyck-Healey<sup>7</sup>, who also wrote about his biography along with other facts about the writer, Hawthorne was an author related to American Romanticism since he wrote all his fiction during the romantic period. He compares him with his contemporary Edgar Allan Poe because they showed certain similarities not only in the style of writing, but also in the themes they used and due to the presence of darkness in much of their fictions. When he compares him with Poe he says that, “unlike Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne's interests were always primarily ethical and philosophical, though his use of supernatural elements, like Poe's, had an aesthetic rather than a religious foundation” (Chadwyck-Healey 2000: 4). As he also uses allegories and symbolism in his works, readers may think that the characters that appear in them reflect “psychological traits” or “moral concepts” so they are not real people, but blurred characters.

Among all the works that Hawthorne published, we find that he wrote a great variety of literary genres such as novels, short stories and even biographical texts, such as the one that he did for his friend Franklin Pierce in 1853.

A significant fact is that, in all his works, this author was interested in a series of issues that somehow reflected the time in which he lived. He paid much attention to the historical settings when he wrote most of his works. He gives us a good depiction of nineteenth century society, which was based on a religious puritanism. Regarding the places, the author based his work in New England and the most recurrent places were Massachusetts, Bay, Plymouth or Salem. Also concerning the themes Hawthorne employs, we can find that he covers many important things at that time such as women's rights, slavery and its later abolition as well as certain themes that characterised all his work, such as guilt or shame, intellectual pride or moral strength versus weakness, all of which were highly noticeable in influential works such as *The Scarlet Letter*, for example.

Leland S. Person (2007: 20-22) also talked about all these issues but he added that there was an important movement, more specifically, transcendentalism, which originated in the late 1820s and 1830s, that also played an important role in Hawthorne's works. Person considered that the movement began in 1836 with the publication of the pamphlet *Nature* by the well-known author

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<sup>7</sup> We can find the full text in Chadwyck-Healey's *Literature Online biography* on [http://0-literature.proquest.com.fama.us.es/searchFulltext.do?id=BIO003063&divLevel=0&area=ref&DurUrl=Yes&forward=critref\\_ft](http://0-literature.proquest.com.fama.us.es/searchFulltext.do?id=BIO003063&divLevel=0&area=ref&DurUrl=Yes&forward=critref_ft) [22/3/2016]

Ralph Waldo Emerson. This movement brought with it many social reform movements and among them the “abolitionism, women's rights, educational reform and utopian experimentation” but above all, this movement stood up for individual freedom. (Person 2007: 20).

Another important theme is the question of childhood. Hawthorne was also interested in literature written for children. Hawthorne wrote a wide range of works aimed at a younger audience, far more than any other male author considered as canonical. Hawthorne always felt a special predilection towards the world of children and he never abandoned his wishes of writing for them, this feeling increasing even further when he had his own children (he had three) and he also enjoyed every moment with them, their growing up, whims, games or ideas that, in the future, would come to serve as a source of inspiration for his fiction. At that time, in 1851, he decided he should write a book devoted to children and then he wrote his famous *A Wonder Book for Girls and Boys* and its sequel called *Tanglewood Tales for Boys and Girls* (1853), both containing several myths about Greek antiquity, among which we find the myth told in “The paradise of children”, which is the one analysed in this essay, dealing with the story of Pandora and the opening of a box which contains all of mankind's troubles.

Karen Sánchez-Eppler (2004: 143-161), who dedicated a whole chapter to talk about the topic of Hawthorne's writing about childhood, says that juvenile fiction taught values such as “honesty, charity or piety” and she considers that, in the years that Nathaniel Hawthorne was writing, it was a period of “change in the ideals and functioning of the middle-class family” (Sánchez-Eppler 2004: 144-145). As a consequence of this period of change, it becomes clear that in his writings on children's literature, a new image of the family emerged that was now ruled by love instead of authority as it was before. She also says that “this new ideal of a home now governed by affection requires a new kind of literature for children [...] that celebrates storytelling as the most effective means of knowing” (Sánchez-Eppler 2004: 150). Having said that, it is true that not all of his interest in this kind of literature came from his love towards children, since some of his letters reveal that he also wrote it for lucrative means to support a literary career. However, we should not forget that he believed that this project could “revolutionize the whole system of juvenile literature” (Sánchez-Eppler 2004: p.150).

Finally, Sánchez-Eppler considers it to be remarkable that in the 1830s, when Hawthorne began publishing some of his tales, there was a larger number of male authors than female writers because at that time, the role of women was designated to be at home and taking care of children, so, it was more typical to associate writing to male authors. In spite of that though, there were also a great number of women who devoted themselves to writing for children because, in some way, they felt much more empathy with child issues since they were the ones who took care of them at home

thus making women “experts on health and home” (Sánchez-Eppler 2004: 146). Consequently, among all these female authors we can find for example the figures of Lydia Maria Child, Fanny Fern, or Catherine Sedgwick, among others.

**b) Literature for children: *A Wonder-Book for Girls and Boys* (1851).**

Nathaniel Hawthorne retells the myth of Pandora in *The paradise of children*, which was included in his book *A Wonder-Book for Girls and Boys*, published in 1851. He depicts the same story about Pandora as a gift from the gods to the mortals from the original Greek myth written by Hesiod in antiquity. He shows us a different perspective since he lived in a later period to his predecessor and things were different at that time. The image that he portrays to the reader in his book is that of a world created only for children; they are the only human beings that are born on Earth and they do not have to worry about anything related to food or toys or whatever they needed because gods provided them with all these things. Therefore, the image of Pandora is that of a child, but she is not the only girl in the tale. There are other girls and boys who live there as orphans and play all together. The only character who does not appear here is Prometheus.

Pandora is delivered to his brother Epimetheus, who would become his playfellow. According to Hawthorne’s version, Pandora finds a box there (described as a big chest in the story), and not a jar as Hesiod told in the original version, when she comes to Epimetheus’ cottage. At the end of the tale, it is also Pandora’s curiosity that makes her open the box and release all the diseases which then spread all over the world.

**c) Classical tradition and reception of the myth of Pandora in *The paradise of children*. Characters, themes, symbols and writer’s style.**

In *The paradise of children*, Hawthorne uses several elements that also appear in Hesiod’s poems *Theogony* and *Works and Days*. Since Hawthorne uses Hesiod as a reference, he gives us more or less the same information that Hesiod had previously used in his poems about Pandora, but now, Hawthorne rewrites the tale, adapting its plot for a child audience. The children are the ones who are spectators of this new version of the story but this version is not too different from the original one told by Hesiod. It is important to say that the world Hawthorne presents here is a world seen from a child's point of view. The story now has a more Christian approach and it is not as pagan as that which occurred with Hesiod in antiquity. He tries to adapt it to the taste of the society of his time. Therefore, the presence and belief in so many gods is not so clear. Hawthorne's religious

influence is going to be Christian and not pagan.

As both myths have many elements in common, we will start with the characters used by Hawthorne. The only names that he keeps are those of Epimetheus and Pandora among all the characters that Hesiod mentioned in *Theogony* and *Works and Days*. They are the only characters that make up this story. We can see that, characters such as Zeus or Prometheus and even the other deities that Hesiod used in his poems to describe the creation of the first woman, Pandora, are not mentioned here and in fact, only Hermes appears as *Quicksilver*. When Pandora asks Epimetheus about the person who could have brought the box, he answers her: “*It was like two serpents twisting around a stick, and was carved so naturally that I, at first, thought the serpents were alive.*” (Hawthorne 1851: 4). This is a clear reference to Hermes' most famous prop: his *caduceus* or *kerykeion*, i.e., a magic stick with two snakes twisting around it. The only role of Hermes here is that of being the messenger of the box.



The paradise of children. Drawing by Arthur Rackham (1922)

On the one hand, there is Epimetheus, who is the main character of this tale. He is here represented as a little boy. He lives in a kind of paradise full of children and they only think about eating and playing games. They do not have any worries, and even the food was provided by nature! They live in Paradise (as the title of the story reminds us), i.e., in a Golden Era.

One day, a present was sent to his house by a messenger. This present was Pandora, who would then live with him and be his “playfellow and helpmate.” (Hawthorne 1851: 3). When Pandora came to Epimetheus' house, he did not feel alone anymore and he believed that he would now have someone with whom he could play but the reality was very different. She did not want to play with him even though Epimetheus was always asking her to go out with the rest of the kids. He

said: *“I wish, dear Pandora, you would try to talk of something else. Come, let us go and gather some ripe figs, and eat them under the trees, for our supper”* (Hawthorne 1851: 4). We can state that Epimetheus is a dull character, that is, he does not change his behaviour throughout the story. He is a simple and typical human and, as such, he is very predictable, as the reader knows beforehand how he is going to behave.

On the other hand, we find Pandora, the other main character of the story. She is a little girl with a different personality to the rest. She does not want to play outside, or to go searching for food. Her only worry is about the box she sees when she arrives at this cottage and she spends all day thinking about opening it. She gets angry because Epimetheus is *“always talking about grapes and figs”* (Hawthorne 1851: 4) while she is longing to open the box. *“This ugly box! I am so taken up with thinking about it all the time. I insist upon your telling me what is inside of it.”* (Hawthorne, 1851: 4). Her curiosity leads her to ask to Epimetheus how the box has arrived there. Pandora's personality is quite different to her playmate and the rest of the children because she is more curious about things, she has more inquisitiveness about the box and the things that surround her. Pandora is, compared to Epimetheus, a fuller character. She displays a greater psychological depth, superfluous. In addition, we can see that throughout the tale she shows us all sides of her behavior. Due to the fact that these kinds of characters change their personality as the story moves forward, it is more difficult to guess how are they going to act. They also show more virtues and faults than the others.

As regards to the themes, we can see that Hawthorne provides a similar focus to the plot but not entirely identical to Hesiod's. He depicts the paradise of the Golden Age and the society described here enjoys a period of total freedom. People who live in Hawthorne's stories are children. They live as orphans, and there are no adults who take care of them. They live in a paradise because everything they wish for is provided by nature, either food or any thing else for that matter. The earth provides them with lots of goods to satisfy all their needs:

*everybody was a child. There needed no fathers and mothers to take care of the children; because there was no danger, nor trouble of any kind, and no clothes to be mended, and there was always plenty to eat and drink. Whenever a child wanted his dinner, he found it growing on a tree; and, if he looked at the tree in the morning, he could see the expanding blossom of that night's supper; or, at eventide, he saw the tender bud of to-morrow's breakfast. It was a very pleasant life indeed* (Hawthorne, 1851 :3).

It is clear that, both authors, Hawthorne and Hesiod, have a Utopian vision about the world in the past that they describe. It is an idealized world, in which nothing bad can happen. In Hesiod's case, he describes the Golden Age as a time where wars do not exist, not even work and people do not grow old or get sick. People belonging to this race had a peaceful and happy life. As such, we

can conclude that the the opening of the box was the only thing that could have ended this period of happiness.

Furthermore, we can also see that in Hawthorne's version there is a parallelism with the Christian idea about paradise lost as it is told in the Bible, also known as the Golden Age. The version of the myth which Hawthorne gives us is not only a paraphrase of Hesiod's version, but it is his own version of the fall of Adam and Eve put forward by John Milton in his *Paradise Lost*. Based on a religious point of view, God created the Garden of Eden and he put the first man on Earth, Adam, and the first woman, Eve, inside it. They also lived in an idyllic place and they enjoyed everything that was there. However, in spite of that, in both stories the ending is the same. The end of this period according to Hesiod came when the titan Prometheus stole fire from the gods and, therefore, he was punished with the delivery of Pandora who would finish with all this welfare. In Hawthorne, the parallelism with Epimetheus and Pandora is the same. Based on the similarities with the Christian tale, Eve would be the one who ate the apple from the forbidden tree. Thus, Adam and Eve would be expelled from paradise and condemned to live without reaching the eternal life. In the *Paradise of children*, Pandora is the one who eventually opens the box and unleashes all the diseases. Thus, she condemns humankind to live a life full of suffering, illness and sorrow. In both traditions, the figure of the woman is created after the man in an artificial way (Pandora created by gods, and Eve from one of Adam's rib, according to the Bible), and in both versions, women are responsible for introducing all bad things in the world. In Hawthorne's version, Pandora is brought to Epimetheus' house. He retold the story by changing the age of the characters and making them children. Like Adam and Eve, Hawthorne's characters are innocent and they live in a paradise but in this case they are surrounded by more children.

There is also a moral and philosophical vision about the myth. This consideration relies on the idea that the box, as the central part of this story, is far more complex than it at first appears. The fact of apparently being a beautiful box carved with striking figures all over its surface, makes it more interesting and attractive to Pandora. However, the fact is that, in spite of that beauty, the only real attraction is that of the evil. The figure of the box gives us or, in the case of Pandora, gives her the option to choose good over evil. Thus, the box would come to be an important symbol in the myth and its role would be that of trying to tempt Pandora all the time.

Another theme is that of knowledge and the thirst for it. Pandora's curiosity is what made her open the box. From the first moment when Pandora is sent to the humans, she seems to be a curious girl and very interested in everything. "*Epimetheus, what have you in that box?*" or "*Where did it*

*come from?*” (Hawthorne 1851: 3), she was always questioning. In Hesiod, she was provided with this gift of curiosity by the gods, but in the case of Hawthorne, there is no evidence that Pandora has been sent by Zeus as a punishment for humans. She is there only in the role of a playmate for Epimetheus and the rest of the children in paradise. In contrast, we find that Epimetheus was just the opposite to her. He did not care about such things and he was more ignorant. This thirst for knowledge is not all good because, in this case, it brings with it bad things and creates a new dilemma: guilt and innocence.

This is another important topic to deal with. Is Pandora the only one responsible for opening the box? In Hawthorne, the blame is shared. He shares the blame because in the end, he gives the same curiosity to Epimetheus as he does to Pandora. According to Martin K. Doubna (1985: 168): “*Like Milton, Hawthorne shows his male protagonist sharing the guilt of his female consort.*” At the beginning, Epimetheus does not approve of Pandora's attitude but in the end, he changes his mind slightly. One of the times when he went inside the cottage where he lived, he wanted to surprise Pandora by putting a garland of flowers on her head, but at the same time Pandora was trying to open the box. Hawthorne says that Epimetheus did not even bother to be silent since “*he had his own share of curiosity to know what was inside*” and he also says that “*after all his sage speeches to Pandora about restraining her curiosity, Epimetheus turned out to be quite as foolish, and nearly as much in fault, as she. So, whenever we blame Pandora for what happened, we must not forget to shake our heads at Epimetheus likewise*” (Hawthorne 1851: 8).<sup>8</sup>

According to Hesiod, we can see that Pandora is blamed for everything. Pandora, created as a punishment for mortals, finally fulfills her mission. She was created with the gift of cunning, but also with other qualities such as that of the curiosity which made her evil and caused her to be the scourge of everything. In Hawthorne's tale more or less the same happens, but he tries not to blame only her but also Epimetheus. Another thing that could have affected Pandora is that she was always alone, isolated and, somehow, obsessed with the box. Pandora did not enjoyed herself, as the other children did, with a simple life, so she became obsessed with the alluring box and with the intricacies of the knot that kept it sealed. That was the only thing in which she could think about all the day long and, for that reason, we believe that she is responsible for opening it. Hawthorne was more merciful than Hesiod as he minimizes the importance of the opening of the box.

As a consequence, when there is guilt, there is always punishment. Children here suffer the consequences of having opened the box. Thus, we can say that the moral of the tale is that, this myth shows us that the curiosity of the human beings should not lead them to do things they were

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<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, according to Laffrado 1994: 84, “*The reduction in characters' ages and therefore their desexualisation, are Hawthorne's construct (...), but it is not a successful strategy to free them from gender codes.*”

previously warned not to do. It is like a kind of challenge for mortals and, in this case, the only way of escaping from it is by having hope and faith. Moreover, as the saying goes, “devil works in idle hands.” Hawthorne seems to think that perhaps a life of idleness and without effort is not a good life. Had Pandora had useful chores to entertain herself, perhaps she would not have had time to think so much about the box.

As far as the theme of Hope is concerned, it is also an important element to analyse. It is not a human being itself, but appears in the tale as a character. At the end of the story we can see that Hawthorne mentions Hope. Hope, in Ancient Greek ἐλπίς, was the personification and spirit of hope. Hope here is inside the box which Pandora opens but she finally escapes and does not stay inside it as took place in Hesiod’s versions.



The figure of hope. Drawing by Petra Steinmeyer (1981)



The figure of hope. Drawing by Arthur Rackham (1922)

Once Pandora has opened the box for the first time, she notices that there is something still remaining inside of it and Hope encourages her to open it once again and let it out. She tries to convince her that she is doing the right thing by saying: “Come, my dear Pandora, lift up the lid. I am in a great hurry to comfort you. Only let me have some fresh air, and you shall soon see that matters are not quite so dismal as you think them!” (Hawthorne 1851: 10). This entity, already inside the box, insists on the idea that Hope is good and has come to the world to stay and help them:

*As long as you need me," said Hope, with her pleasant smile,—"and that will be as long as you live in the world,—I promise never to desert you. There may come times and seasons, now and then, when you will think that I have utterly vanished. But again, and again, and again, when perhaps you least dream of it, you shall see the glimmer of my wings on the ceiling of your cottage. Yes, my dear children, and I know something very good and beautiful that is to be given you hereafter!"* (Hawthorne 1851: 10).



Hawthorne uses hope as a symbol of salvation, meaning that not everything is lost. Hawthorne's portrayal about hope leads us to think about the one used by John Milton in his *Paradise Lost*. The only difference is that in Milton's paradise we find that it is an angel who plays this role instead of the image of hope. With Hawthorne, this hope recalls a Christian hope in the coming of a saviour who, in this case, is Jesus Christ, the one who would redeem humankind of sin and death. Now that the box has been opened, the world is full of bad things, but hope wants the children to trust it because, when they think that everything is lost, they always have to see the light at the end of the tunnel and believe that something good may come. Hope does not seek to ensure that everything is going to be resolved without further ado but, as the saying goes, "hope is the last thing you lose." Hawthorne supports this idea saying that "*Hope spiritualizes the earth; Hope makes it always new; and, even in the earth's best and brightest aspect, Hope shows it to be only the shadow of an infinite bliss hereafter!*" (Hawthorne 1851:11).

As we mentioned earlier, another important element which appears in the *Paradise of children* is the box. The box (a jar, according to Hesiod) is an object that is mentioned in the plot all the time, from the very first lines until the end. Hawthorne, in contrast to Hesiod, emphasizes it much more. Hesiod makes slight reference to it in *Works and Days*. Conversely, Nathaniel Hawthorne gives us a lot of details about the box and he describes it with total precision: "*It was made of a beautiful kind of wood, with dark and rich veins spreading over its surface, which was so highly polished that little Pandora could see her face in it.*" (Hawthorne, 1851: 5). He even talks about some images it had on its cover:

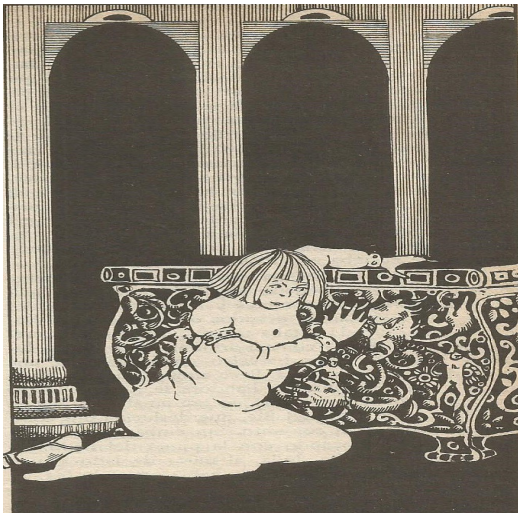
*The edges and corners of the box were carved with most wonderful skill. Around the margin there were figures of graceful men and women, and the prettiest children ever seen, reclining or sporting amid a profusion of flowers and foliage; and these various objects were so exquisitely represented, and were wrought together in such harmony, that flowers, foliage, and human beings seemed to combine into a wreath of mingled beauty.* (Hawthorne, 1851: 5).

According to Doubna (1985: 168), "*just as Eve is fascinated by the beauty of the serpent in which Satan is incarnate, so Pandora is fascinated by the beauty of the face done in high relief in the center of the lid of the box.*" Hawthorne describes the box as a temptation for Pandora as it occurred in Milton's work. The only difference is that Eve makes the mistake of being tempted by the serpent but, in the case of Pandora, she is aware that she is being tempted.

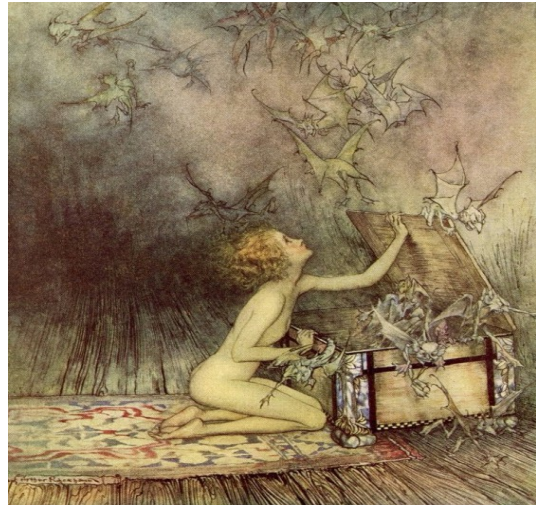
The narrator does not talk only about the physical appearance of the box but he also tells us something about its lock. He gives great importance to the knot and the way it was tied. He says that the box is locked with a golden cord:

*The box, I had almost forgotten to say, was fastened; not by a lock, nor by any other such*

*contrivance, but by a very intricate knot of gold cord. There appeared to be no end to this knot, and no beginning. Never was a knot so cunningly twisted, nor with so many ins and outs, which roguishly defied the skilfullest fingers to disentangle them.* (Hawthorne 1851: 5).



Pandora's box. Drawing by Petra Steinmeyer (1981)



Pandora's box. Drawing by Arthur Rackham (1922)

As Hawthorne says, “*by the very difficulty that there was in it, Pandora was the more tempted to examine the knot, and just see how it was made*” (Hawthorne, 1851: 5). The attractiveness of the box was not only because of the faces carved on it but also the knot. The box was a constant temptation for Pandora who was captivated by it. Pandora, who was observing the box close up, discovered that by undoing the knot: “*so she took the golden knot in her fingers, and pried into its intricacies as sharply as she could. Almost without intending it, or quite knowing what she was about, she was soon busily engaged in attempting to undo it.*” (Hawthorne, 1851:7). Pandora was completely fascinated by the face on the surface of the box and by the knot too. As such, she was always fiddling it with her fingers trying to untie it and, suddenly, “*by the merest accident, she gave the knot a kind of a twist, which produced a wonderful result. The gold cord untwined itself, as if by magic, and left the box without a fastening.*” (Hawthorne, 1851: 7). Once Pandora had untied the knot, she immediately started to think about how she was going to put it back to how it was before. She only could think about Epimetheus and in what he would probably say if he saw the rope untied. So she tried to tie it again but failed. She then realised that she was not able to do because she could not remember its original shape and appearance.

The technique of describing the objects that Nathaniel Hawthorne uses here is called *ekphrasis*, coming from Greek ἐκ 'out' and φράζω 'show'. This is the art of describing objects. Hawthorne is a real master here when he describes the box. Thus, the use of a description containing so many details, enables the reader to conjure up a specific visual representation about

the object in question. In this way, we can have get an idea of its size, shape and colour.

Hawthorne's box contains ugliness and beauty at the same time because it contains both bad and good things. It is a symbol of good and evil, which are things inextricably connected in the world. It is precisely its external beauty that grabs our attention, despite the box being little bit dangerous for what it contains within. The box is also a reflection of the world in which Pandora and Epimetheus live. It is a symbol of this paradise. In a certain way, it could also be the temptation of evil because it seems as if the box were laughing at Pandora all the time, and enticing her to open it: "*The features, indeed, all wore a very lively and rather mischievous expression, which looked almost as if it needs must burst out of the carved lips, and utter itself in words*" (Hawthorne, 1851: 5). In fact, Hawthorne says that, if the box could speak, it probably would say to Pandora: "*Do not be afraid, Pandora! What harm can there be in opening the box? Never mind that poor, simple Epimetheus! You are wiser than he, and have ten times as much spirit. Open the box, and see if you do not find something very pretty!*" (Hawthorne, 1851: 5).

Another important point to consider is the style of the author. Apparently, and according to certain authors, Hawthorne could have relied on a scholarly reference work as it was *Anthon's Classical Dictionary* to write these tales and not on any classical text from antiquity (Baym, 1973: 35). His work could be also partly autobiographical.

It is also important to say that an author should always keep his audience in mind when he creates a work of such qualities, focused on children. According to Nina Baym (1973: 35), "*if the narratives are not of the author's own devising, then his major technical concern [...] must be how to modify these narratives to suit a conception of childish sensibility.*" However, the author not only has to bear in mind a child audience, but also has to understand that among all his or her readers, there may also be adults enjoying his or her work. Hawthorne's audience consists of "*fairy children,*" so they have qualities that coincide better with their age, as they are "*innocent, curious, unsophisticatedly blunt and unpredictable.*" (Rubenstein 1970: 33).

Another remarkable fact is that the names of the children appearing as listeners of these stories are not the names of real people, they are actually invented because he fears, tells us Eustace in the tale, that as may have occurred in other cases in which the writers have run into problems because they used real names, someone may have felt offended by it. He uses names such as Primrose, Periwinkle, Dandelion, Sweet Fern, Blue Eye or Clover.

As for the characters, he does not give them those wonderful features such as the strength or the adventuresome spirit, characteristic of the Greek mythological heroes. Rubenstein specifies that "*They are "white" heroes opposed by "black," wicked worldly enemies, who force the hero to go on some adventure and who always receive their just rewards.*" (Rubenstein 1970: 34). Hawthorne

also omits certain aspects that recall violence by eliminating bloody battles from his tales and he even avoids talking about prophecies and curses that were mentioned in the myths regarding the heritage of the hero. He also eliminates the gods and he replaces them with “*magical elfish characters like Quicksilver*” (Rubenstein 1970: 35).

All of these points form a global union about the Christianized moral sense Hawthorne had. Hawthorne changed these myths inside of a Christian society. Rubenstein affirms that “*he employs all his talent to depict a living and convincing child-like world*” and “*he frames his stories maintaining a consistency of mood, his heroes are consistently child-like and perform their tasks in a valid child-like manner*” (Rubenstein, 1970: 38). Indeed, Hawthorne created a “little people's world” dedicated to the children who read his stories.

As we have mentioned before, Hawthorne creates a world of children where his stories are set. He divides each story into three parts: the first, an “introduction to the story”, the second, the story itself, and a final part called “after the story.” All the stories are narrated by Eustace Bright, a college student,<sup>9</sup> who is the only adult in the book. According to Robert Rubenstein, who wrote about it, “*Eustace becomes Hawthorne's means of injecting Christian moral overtones and of eliminating in the stories what Hawthorne feels are pagan or distasteful elements not suitable for children's ears*” (Rubenstein 1970: 31). The creation of this character and being employed as the storyteller, gives Hawthorne more artistic freedom to write about these myths. It does not only help him in that way, but it also establishes the mood and setting for the stories he wrote. The young boy is a transcript of the writer himself. He was the only character which the author identified with in a more optimistic way as both tell stories to a childish audience, one within the fiction and the other outside. In addition, Hawthorne believes that his stories about these myths are not connected with the original ones and, for that reason, he changes them into fanciful stories and accordingly in this way nobody can miss the mythological point of view that existed in antiquity. He also tries to adapt the setting and language of his work to the tastes of that time and, above all, to the morals of society. He is always aware of the fact that his readers must like all the changes he makes to these tales. According to Baym (1973: 36), “*Hawthorne was always deeply convinced that an author who is to succeed must present his works in a fashion at once acceptable and appealing to his readers.*” The framework of the tales contains many landscape descriptions allowing the readers imagine the setting as well as the lifestyle of the characters.

Among all the stories that we find in his work *A Wonder Book for Girls and Boys*, we can see that the author greatly differentiates between both masculine and feminine genders. This can be

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<sup>9</sup> According to Laffrado 1992: 67, “*In Eustace Bright, Hawthorne presents his youngest narrator of children's stories.*”

clearly seen when he dedicates those stories about adventures to boys and those which related to the domestic tasks to girls. Nina Baym says that “*they exhibit a conventional socializing didacticism, inculcating feminine and masculine virtues appropriate to the places assigned to the sexes in society.*” (1973:39). Having said that, he groups them together as the children they are (not paying attention to whether they are boys or girls), characterizing them with the “imaginative sensibility” they have. In addition, he created those fables with an “*intrinsic, original warmth and passion that the classical versions have somehow lost.*” (Baym 1973: 40). Undoubtedly, his style helped him to become famous and all these tales would not only help him earn more money but also they would be a great boost to his career as a writer, at the same time, creating a good image of him.

#### **4. Conclusions**

In summary, Hawthorne has perfectly adapted the challenging myth of Pandora to children. He is an author who has managed to remain faithful to the original versions told by Hesiod. He has rewritten this myth to adapt it to a younger public and to the taste of the time. Although he has removed all the pagan elements that characterize the original versions, he has maintained the essence of the ancient Greek myth.

Moreover, the originality of his work lies in the fact that he turns the characters, Epimetheus and Pandora, into child characters. He keeps these two characters as the protagonists of his story and he rewrites the whole plot revolving completely around them and the box, and he does not give too much importance to the rest of the characters that appeared in the original versions. Pandora and Epimetheus are now children who live with other children in the world that Hawthorne has created for them and they are not the adults who appeared in Hesiod's versions.

Furthermore, there is another thing that he focuses on in his figuration of the story: the box. He makes an in-depth description of the box allowing the readers to imagine it while they are reading the story. The use of this technique, called ekphrasis, makes Hawthorne a master at describing objects. It also gives more realism to the story and makes it more graphic to the reader's mind. He focuses his attention on the external appearance of the box and all the carved images it has on it. The details of the box are perfectly described in such a way that the reader can see the uncanny beauty of this object.

Furthermore, Hawthorne manages to resist the patriarchal and misogynistic versions of the myth, which he appropriates for his own concerns on freedom, equality, guilt and redemption. He eliminates all the vestiges that previously led us to think that the woman (from the moment when Pandora opened the box onwards) was the culprit of all bad things that happened in the world.

Pandora, who is now seen as the feminine archetype, is in a way free from the blame. Thus, Hawthorne attenuates the blame and he shares it between Pandora and Epimetheus. He tries to differentiate them from the very beginning depicting them as opposed characters who have nothing in common. Pandora was more curious, while Epimetheus was more conformist and did not want to know anything about the box. It is at the end of the story when the author connects them trying to say that Epimetheus also has a little bit of curiosity due to the fact that he was also a child like Pandora and at this age they only want to explore into things that seem to be enigmatic at first glance. In addition to this, Hawthorne seems to put into question the supposed blessings of an easy and idle life in paradise as work and effort can be useful and worthy. We have to look on the bright side of this because the thirst for knowledge that Pandora had is something good, the reason being that as a consequence she has made people believe in hope. When something bad happens, there is still the possibility that things will get better and so we have to remain hopeful.

To sum up, Hawthorne was an author who wanted to innovate. He wanted, in some way, to compete with other authors of his time. His priority was to stand out from the rest meaning he had to create a remarkable work and something that pleased everybody. As a writer, he is a very good one. His tales are delightful to the reader. He uses rich vocabulary but, at the same time, it is easy to read. He is also a master of creating intrigue and he achieves this with the descriptions he provides, full of fantasy and imagination. He maintains the suspense right until the end always keeping the reader on the edge of the seat.

#### **4. Conclusiones**

En conclusión, Hawthorne ha adaptado a la perfección esta obra para niños. Es un autor que ha sabido mantenerse fiel a la versión original contada por Hesíodo. Ha reescrito este mito para adaptarlo a un público más joven y al gusto de la época. Aunque él ha eliminado todos los elementos paganos que caracterizan al original, ha mantenido la esencia del mito de Hesíodo.

Además, la originalidad de su obra reside en el hecho de que él convierte los personajes, Epimeteo y Pandora, en personajes infantiles. Mantiene estos dos personajes como los protagonistas de su historia y escribe toda la trama ocupándose de ellos y de la caja y no le dio mucha importancia al resto de personajes que aparecían en la versión original. Ellos son ahora niños que viven solos en el mundo que Hawthorne ha creado para ellos y no son los adultos que aparecían en la versión de Hesíodo.

Además, hay otra cosa que el autor enfatiza mucho: la caja. Él hace una profunda descripción de la caja, permitiendo a los lectores imaginarla como si ésta fuese tangible cuando

están leyendo la historia. El uso de esta técnica, llamada ecfrásis, hacen de Hawthorne un maestro describiendo objetos. Esto da además más realismo a la historia y la hace más gráfica a la mente del lector. Él centra su atención en la apariencia de la caja y en todas las imágenes talladas que tiene en el exterior en la tapa así como en la base. Los detalles de la caja son perfectamente descritos de un modo que el lector pueda ver la belleza de este objeto.

Además de esto, otra cosa que lo hace diferente es que él tiene un avisión optimista de la mujer y no misógina como ocurría en la antigüedad. Él elimina todas las huellas que previamente nos llevaban a pensar que la mujer (desde el momento en que Pandora abrió la caja en adelante) era la culpable de todas las cosas que ocurrían en el mundo. Pandora, que es ahora vista como arquetipo femenino, queda liberada de la culpa. Así, Hawthorne disminuye la culpa y la comparte, la hace común entre Pandora y Epimeteo. Trata de diferenciarlos desde el principio haciéndolos personajes opuestos que no tienen nada en común. Pandora era más curiosa, mientras que Epimeteo era más ignorante y no quería saber nada de la caja. Es al final de la historia cuando el autor los conecta tratando de decir que Epimeteo tiene también un poco de curiosidad debido al hecho de que él era también un niño como Pandora y las personas a esa edad sólo quieren investigar las cosas que parecen enigmáticas a primera vista. Sin embargo, tenemos que mirarlo por el lado bueno porque el afán de conocimiento que Pandora tiene es un afán bueno. Es bueno porque ella ha provocado que, a consecuencia de esto, ha hecho que la gente crea en la esperanza. Desde este momento en adelante, la gente piensa que siempre hay que esperar el lado bueno de las cosas. Cuando algo malo ocurre, cabe todavía la posibilidad de que las cosas mejoren así que tenemos que mantenernos esperanzados.

En conclusión, Hawthorne era además un autor que quería innovar. Él quería, de algún modo, competir con otros autores de su época. Su prioridad era la de destacar del resto así que él tenía que crear una obra excepcional y algo que gustase a todo el mundo. Él usa un vocabulario muy rico pero, al mismo tiempo, es fácil de leer. Él es un maestro creando intriga y lo consigue con las descripciones que hace. Mantiene el suspense hasta el final haciendo al lector estar expectante.

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