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## Theatre as Truth Practice: Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*

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## Stellingen / Propositions

behorende bij het proefschrift / with the PhD thesis

### ***Theatre as Truth Practice: Arthur Miller's The Crucible – a Play Waiting for the Occasion***

door / by

**Aamir Aziz**

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1. I agree with Miller when he states: 'This play is not history in the sense in which the word is used by the academic historian'.
2. Past and present are caught in a mutual embrace in postmodern works of art. In *The Crucible*, the Salem case appears to be used as a parody of McCarthyism. However, according to Mieke Bal's logic of preposterousness, this order is reversed and McCarthyism becomes the parody of Salem.
3. Joseph McCarthy's role was historically speaking 'healthy' because he dramatized intolerance, lent it crude and villainous features and personalized it through a mediatized national spectacle. Miller confronted all this via a theatre play that still echoes where and whenever a politics of fear is practiced.
4. If *The Crucible* is a play waiting for the occasion, this occasion could be slightly bigger, or much bigger, than any political situation within a region or nation state.
5. Literature, in its capacity of a historical institution, with its democratic prerogative to 'say all' and with its conventions and rules, produces the space that Derrida calls instituted *fiction* and a *fictive* institution.
6. There is potentially a general threat of violence and loss of life when irrational terror is used to ground an official, politically sanctioned attitude of moral goodness.
7. *The Crucible* acts, as a whole, in terms of speaking the truth, regardless of the consequences, much like Foucault's notion of *parrhesia*.
8. Literature and literary authors can hold a society from disintegrating.
9. Life feels more beautiful when we magnanimously accept all its challenges and crises.
10. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, pursuing a major in the Humanities is not only daring but dicey too.